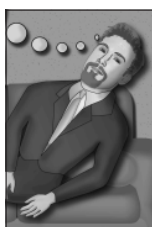


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TODAY IN STRIPES

Abby, Annie's Mailbox.....	20
American Roundup	16-17
Classified	22-24
Comics	18-20
Crossword	19
Faces	12
Horoscope	18
Letters	14
Opinion	14-15
Sports	25-32
TV listings	13
Weather	21

News Tracker ... What's new with old news

War on terrorism

Kuwait killings: An Army sergeant who faces a court-martial for killing two officers in a grenade attack in Kuwait needs further treatment for a sleep disorder, his defense lawyers told a judge in Fort Bragg, N.C., on Monday.

Sgt. Hasan Akbar of the 101st Airborne Division fell asleep during pretrial hearings in military court last year, causing a judge to order treatment for his sleep apnea. But defense lawyer Maj. David Coombs said Akbar is still plagued by problems.

The military judge, Col. Stephen Henley, said he would take a recess at least every 90 minutes but denied Coombs' request for a break after each witness.

Missing French reporter: France is still searching discreetly for a reporter and her Iraqi translator missing for nearly a month in Iraq, French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier said Monday.

Barnier said concerns for their safety prevent him from saying much about the disappearance of Florence Aubenas, of the daily newspaper Liberation, and Hussein Haouni al-Saadi.

"The priority for me is the security of Florence Aubenas and her assistant. We are working with discretion," the minister said on Europe-1 radio.

States

Rhode Island nightclub fire: The lead singer for the 1980s rock band Great White has refused to answer allegations in civil suits filed against him by victims of the deadly nightclub fire that was sparked by the band's pyrotechnics.

In papers filed in U.S. District Court, Jack Russell's lawyers said he "faces a real possibility of criminal prosecution" for the 2003 fire that killed 100 people, and that therefore, he is asserting his Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination.

Mike Hesley, spokesman for Attorney General Patrick Lynch, told The Providence Journal for Monday's editions that "there is no open grand jury investigation going on" in connection with the fire at the Station nightclub in West Warwick.

Georgia ice storm: The thick blankets of ice that caused havoc on Georgia roadways and runways began slowly melting, aiding efforts to restore power to thousands of homes and businesses hit by a winter blast.

By Monday morning, about 57,000 homes and businesses in the state still were without power, compared with 102,000 who were without power Sunday afternoon.



Remembering Johnny Carson: Bonnie Bamsey of Norfolk, Neb., right, looks at a program for a memorial honoring famed talk show host Johnny Carson, as Gene Kincanon looks on Sunday at the Carson Theatre in Norfolk. Carson didn't want a public memorial in Los Angeles, but people from the Nebraska town where the comedian was raised gathered at the high school auditorium that bears his name for a last chance to say goodbye.

New Jersey governor's race: U.S. Sen. Jon Corzine's quest for the governorship in 2005 apparently has gotten a boost with word that the man currently occupying the position won't challenge the deep-pocketed senator.

Acting Gov. Richard J. Codey announced Monday that he will skip a run for a full term as governor, a decision he based partly on concerns that he could not raise the money needed to challenge Corzine in the Democratic primary.

Calif. train derailment: Commuter trains resumed full service Monday morning after crews repaired rails damaged by last week's deadly derailment that killed 11 people after a man left his SUV parked on the tracks in Glendale, Calif.

Passenger runs through suburban Glendale along the Ventura County and Antelope Valley lines were restored before dawn, said Metrolink spokeswoman Denise Tyrrell.

"It's somber," Tyrrell said by phone from a train that left Ventura County. "Many of these people were on the train during the crash and many considered the people killed ... family."

World

War crimes tribunals: U.N. war crimes judges in The Hague, Netherlands, sentenced an ailing, 71-year-old Yugoslav gen-

eral to eight years in prison Monday for failing to punish subordinates who carried out the deadly 1991 shelling of the Croatian town of Dubrovnik.

But Gen. Pavle Strugar was acquitted of the more serious allegations of murder and ordering the shelling during the 1991-95 war in Croatia. The Dec. 6, 1991, attack killed two civilians and destroyed much of medieval Dubrovnik's protected Old City, a UNESCO world heritage site since 1979.

Asian bird flu deaths: A 10-year-old girl from southern Vietnam became the 12th person to die of bird flu in a month, health officials said Monday, as authorities took precautions to keep the disease from spreading during the upcoming Lunar New Year festivities.

The girl from Long An province died Sunday night after surviving about a week in critical condition on a respirator, said a doctor from Pediatrics Hospital Number One in Ho Chi Minh City.

Deadly bus crash: Investigators sought to determine why a bus chartered for a Canadian hockey team swerved and rammed a parked tractor-trailer so hard that the bus split in half lengthwise, killing four people and injuring 19.

Visibility at the time of the Saturday afternoon wreck in western New York was good, and the highway was dry and clear, state police Maj. Steven White said Sunday.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

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Two Okinawans get redress in copter crash

By DAVID ALLEN

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — U.S. Forces Japan and the Japanese government have agreed to compensate two residents of Ginowan for mental trauma caused by the crash of a Marine helicopter in their community last August.

The names of the residents and the amount of compensation were not released by either USFJ or the Defense Facilities Administration.

tion Agency. "We reached an agreement Thursday," said a DFAA spokesman. "The amount of the compensation is, however, not releasable to protect the privacy of the residents."

On Aug. 13, a Marine CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopter crashed on the Okinawa International University campus, clipping the school's administration building before bursting into flames.

Only the three crewmembers were injured, although debris

from the helicopter damaged property in the surrounding neighborhood.

A Marine Corps investigation attributed the accident to the loss of the tail rotor and a section of the tail rotor pylon. An investigator said the maintenance crew, suffering from lack of sleep, failed to re-install a cotter pin on a bolt in the tail rotor assembly during a routine adjustment on the tail rotor flight control.

According to the DFAA, the pay-

ment is being made in accordance with the Status of Forces Agreement between the U.S. and Japan. Under the agreement, Japan will pay the claim and then request the United States to reimburse it for 75 percent of the amount.

A DFAA official said it is the first time the government has agreed to pay medical claims for mental distress incurred by incidents involving U.S. forces in Japan. He said similar compensation is being considered in two additional cases.

Between Nov. 24 and Dec. 19, the DFAA's Naha Bureau surveyed 199 people who live near the crash scene and identified four people as possibly suffering from psychological problems connected to the incident. The agency determined compensation should be paid to two persons and the health of the other two will be monitored.

Chiomi Sumida contributed to this report.

E-mail David Allen at: allen@dstripes.osd.mil

2 nailed for quick rescue of jet crew

By GREG TYLER

Stars and Stripes

The crew of a fighter jet lost at sea when they tried to land on the USS Kitty Hawk — and troops who saved some of the crewmembers — recall last Saturday night as one they won't soon forget.

The F/A-18F Super Hornet from Strike Fighter Squadron 102 was attempting a night recovery, or landing, about 6:30 p.m., according to a Kitty Hawk spokeswoman. When the Atsugi Naval Air Facility aircraft couldn't stop, both pilots ejected.

"The aircraft was lost after landing when the No. 3 arresting gear wire parted," Chief Petty Officer B. Natalie Dias, Kitty Hawk's deputy public affairs officer, said Monday.

The Super Hornet subsequently fell off the aircraft carrier and into the Pacific Ocean about 100 miles southeast of Yokosuka Naval Base, the Kitty Hawk's permanent base of operation.

"An SH-60F Seahawk of Helicopter Antisubmarine Warfare Squadron 14, which was on the flight deck at the time of the accident, sustained substantial damage to its tail section" when the plane hit it, Dias added. "No damage impacting the operational capability of USS Kitty Hawk occurred."

Six servicemen were injured in the accident, with three still hospitalized as of Monday afternoon, the spokeswoman said. The Navy on Monday released the names, ranks and medical conditions of those injured and stated that the incident remains under investigation.

The Super Hornet pilot, Lt. j.g. Jon Vanbragt, and weapons systems operator with HS-14, described the rescue as almost surreal. "As soon as I hit the water, my adrenaline shot through the roof," he stated in the report. "I did everything I was trained to



PHOTOS BY LAMEL J. HINTON/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Rear Adm. James D. Kelly, far left, commander of Carrier Strike Group 5, congratulates Petty Officers 2nd Class Bennie Romiti, second from right, and Jerard Cook, far right, on Sunday for their rescue of Lt. Cmdr. Markus Gudmundsson and Lt. j.g. Jon Vanbragt of Strike Fighter Squadron 102 on Saturday night. Cook and Romiti are aviation warfare systems operators assigned to Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron 14, which is attached to Carrier Air Wing Five.

Injured crewmembers

■ Petty Officer 3rd Class Robert Roeder, VAQ-136, Atsugi Naval Air Facility. He was transported Saturday night to U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka, where he remains in an undisclosed condition.

■ Petty Officer 3rd Class Jarrett Smith, USS Kitty Hawk's Air Department: Catapults and Arresting Gear Division. He was transported Saturday night to the Yokosuka hospital, where he remains in an undisclosed condition.

■ Airman Dominic Washington, Kitty Hawk's Air Department: Catapults and Arresting Gear Division. He was transported Saturday night to the Yokosuka hospital, where he remains in an undisclosed condition.

■ Petty Officer 3rd Class Lamar Johnson, HS-14, Atsugi. He has been released from medical care and returned to Atsugi.

■ Petty Officer 3rd Class Andrew Crawford, VAQ-136, Atsugi. He has been released from medical care and returned to Atsugi.

■ Airman Daniel Abosaid, HS-14, Atsugi. He has been released from medical care and returned to Atsugi.

Source: Kitty Hawk public affairs

"But then we saw the rescue team coming and we knew we would be all right."

Two swimmers — Petty Officers 2nd Class Jerard Cook and Bennie Romiti — were lowered from separate rescue helicopters. "At first, I didn't believe that it was for real when I heard the call coming in over the radio," said Cook, an aviation warfare systems operator with Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron 14.

In the ship news report, Romiti, also an aviation warfare systems operator with HS-14, described the rescue as almost surreal. "As soon as I hit the water, my adrenaline shot through the roof," he stated in the report. "I did everything I was trained to

do when it comes to rescuing team coming and we knew we would be all right."

Cook hooked Vanbragt to the helicopter cable. "He was calmer than I was," Cook recalled in the report. "I was so excited, I didn't even notice the water was cold."

But others noticed the two petty officers' efforts. Cook and Romiti, said spokeswoman Dias, were honored and congratulated Sunday by Capt. Tom Parker, Kitty Hawk skipper, and Rear Adm. James D. Kelly, commander of Carrier Strike Group 5, who presented them with memorial coins.

"It feels great to know that we saved two people," Romiti stated. "So they can go back to their wives and kids."

E-mail Greg Tyler at: tyler@dstripes.osd.mil



Cook, above, and Romiti, below, take turns sitting in Kitty Hawk commander Capt. Tom A. Parker's chair on the ship's bridge Sunday as they were honored by Parker and Kelly.



Kinnick HS bazaar

The Kinnick High School Boosters will hold an annual bazaar from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday in the Sullivan's Elementary School gym at Yokosuka Naval Base.

Proceeds are to support the Kinnick High School Boosters.

Yokosuka play

The Yokosuka Middle School Drama Club will present "Forever Free," an anti-drug musical, at 1:30 p.m. Thursday in the school's multipurpose room.

The free play is meant to convey a message about making good choices.

Popcorn is available for a donation to aid tsunami victims in South Asia.

Contact drama club adviser Carrie Jackson for more information.

Lester teen detained

NAHA, Okinawa — A 14-year-old dependent of a Marine warrant officer spent the night in Japanese police custody Friday, accused of striking a taxi with a car owned by a friend's father, then running away from the scene.

According to an Okinawa police spokesman, the girl was driving a sport utility vehicle when she apparently hit a taxi from behind at 10:15 p.m. in Naha's Matsuyama district.

She then ran from the scene, leaving behind her 8-year-old brother and three friends, the spokesman said.

She was caught a short distance from the scene, he said.

The ninth-grader, who was released from custody Saturday afternoon, faces possible charges of driving without a license and fleeing the scene of an accident, the police spokesman said.

The girl told police she'd driven to Naha from Camp Lester, where she lives.

Police said they're also investigating another hit-and-run accident in Naha, involving a parked car, which occurred some 15 minutes before the taxi was struck.

From staff reports

Iraq begins counting ballots from historic vote

Iraqis urged to focus on future; 3 Marines die near Baghdad

BY JASON KEYSER
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq's interim leader called on his countrymen to set aside their differences Monday, while polling stations finished the first-phase count of millions of ballots from the weekend election that many Iraqis hope will usher in democracy and hasten the departure of 150,000 American troops.

From the counts by individual stations, local centers will prepare tally sheets and send them to Baghdad, where vote totals will be compiled, election commission official Adel al-Lami said. Final results could take up to 10 days.

With turnout in the vote still unknown, concern was focused on participation by Iraq's Sunni Arab minority, amid fears that the group that drives the insurgency could grow ever more alienated.

Election commission officials said turnout in hard-line Shiite areas was better than some expected, though they cited no numbers. A U.S. diplomat warned that Sunni participation appeared "considerably lower" than that of other groups.

In his first news conference since the elections, Iraqi interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi called on Iraqis to join together to build a society shattered by decades of war, tyranny, economic sanctions and military occupation.

The terrorists now know that they cannot win," he said. "We are entering a new era of our history and all Iraqis — whether they voted or not — should stand side by side to build their future."

He promised to work to ensure that the voice of all Iraqis is present in the coming government.



Election officials count ballots Sunday under the scrutiny of monitors after polling stations closed in Irbil, part of the Kurdish northern region of Iraq.

In new violence, three U.S. Marines were killed in fighting south of Baghdad on Monday, after two Marines were killed on election day. At least 44 people were killed in violence Sunday, when there were nine suicide attacks, most near polling sites in Baghdad.

The country was already focusing on goals almost as challenging as the election itself: forming a new governing coalition once the vote is known, then writing a constitution and winning trust.

The main Shiite clerical-backed faction in the race was already claiming a strong showing in the election. Officials of the United Iraqi Alliance said they expected to win at least 45 percent — and maybe even a slim outright majority — of the seats in the 275-member National Assembly. Local officials of the party in the alliance said the list swept some southern cities, winning 90 percent of the votes in Najaf and 80 percent in Basra.

The claims could not be confirmed, and the Alliance had been expected to run strong in the Shiite heartland. Going into the vote,

the list headed by Allawi was also considered a main contender.

A powerful showing for the Alliance, which was endorsed by the Shiite Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, could make Sunnis even more reluctant to accept the results of the election — particularly if Sunni participation turns out to have been low.

Although turnout figures were unavailable, a U.S. diplomat briefing reporters on condition of anonymity said "good anecdotal information" indicated that "Sunni participation was considerably lower than participation by the other groups, especially in areas which have seen a great deal of violence."

The Iraqi Islamic Party, a leading Sunni faction, feels the vote was not inclusive "because an important segment of the Sunni Muslim community didn't take part," said party official Naser Ayef al-Ani. Large, heavily Sunni sections of the country were unable to cast ballots, and in some places lack of security forced polling places to open late or not at all, officials said.

In neighboring Jordan, King Ab-

dullah said in an interview with CNN on Monday that Sunni participation was "a lot lower than any of us hoped."

After an election ban on most daytime driving, cars again were their way down Baghdad's streets Monday. "Now I feel that Saddam is really gone," said Fatima Ibrahim, smiling as she headed home after voting in Irbil, in the Kurdish northern region. She was 14 and a bride of just three months when her husband, father and brother were rounded up in a campaign of ethnic cleansing under Saddam. None have ever been found.

It was still unclear if the successful vote would deal a significant blow to the insurgents or lead to a short-term rise in violence. The militants might need time to regroup after the spate of attacks they launched in the weeks before the vote.

Iraq's 275-member National Assembly, elected for an 11-month term, will draft a permanent constitution, and if the document is approved, Iraqis will vote for a permanent government in December. If the document is rejected, Iraqis will repeat the whole process again.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Sunday, at least 1,429 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At their 1,087 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said.

The AP count includes four military civilians and is 18 higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Friday.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 20; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 16; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,291 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 978 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military and the State Department:

■ A Marine was killed Sunday in Iraq's Anbar province.

The latest identifications reported by the Defense Department:

■ No identifications reported.

Once results are in, it could take weeks of backdoor deals before a prime minister and government are picked by the new assembly. If that government can draw in the minority Sunni Arab minority, partly shunned the election, the country could stabilize, hastening the day when 150,000 U.S. troops can exit.

Republican, Democratic lawmakers praise Iraq election, discuss security

BY LIZ SIDOTT
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congressional Republicans and Democrats alike called the Iraq election a success on Monday, praising Iraqis for having the courage to embrace democracy despite attacks by insurgents.

The next priority, Republicans said, must be fully training an Iraqi security force so that the country can protect its own fledgling government and the 150,000 U.S. troops in Iraq ultimately can return home. Some Democrats, meanwhile, called on the administration to outline an exit strategy.

Insurgents continued their assaults as Iraqis went to the polls Sunday, to elect a 275-member National Assembly, seven months after Iraq's interim government took over from a U.S.-led coalition.

"We should salute the courage of Iraqi voters and of American military men and women and now see this mission through to the end, helping to preserve security while training Iraqis to defend themselves," said Sen. Lamar Alexander, a Republican.

Rep. Duncan Hunter, Republican chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, said that while the U.S. can't withdraw

troops now, as some Democrats have called for, security responsibilities must be given to Iraq as quickly as possible.

"The more they operate and respond to their own government, the stronger this elected civilian government will be," he said.

Rep. Ike Skelton, the ranking Democrat on that committee, said the training was going "disappointingly slow," but added that the U.S. has "no choice but to continue."

As for U.S. troops, Skelton said: "I think there might be some light at the end of the tunnel on bringing a good many of them home," given that Iraqis have made a step toward putting their own government together.

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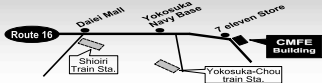


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Insurgents claim downing of British C-130

BY OMAR SINAN
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Insurgents claimed on Monday to have shot down a British military plane north of Baghdad over the weekend, and Al-Jazeera television aired a videotape from guerrillas showing flaming wreckage of a plane. Britain said all 10 personnel on the flight were missing and presumed dead.

The toll would make it the deadliest single incident suffered by the British military in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003.

The C-130 Hercules crashed about 25 miles north of Baghdad on Sunday, about a half-hour after polls closed in Iraq's landmark election.

The video was issued by the "Green Brigade," a previously unknown arm of an Iraqi militant group — and its authenticity could not be confirmed.

It showed a finger pressing a button on a white box with wires, and then images of two missiles or rockets flying up into the air.

The video did not show any impact with a plane.

Instead, it cut to footage of people in street clothes walking through a plane's wreckage burning on the ground. It was not immediately possible to determine if the wreckage was that of the crashed C-130.

British plane crash

A British transport plane crashed north of Baghdad Sunday. Ten personnel onboard were presumed dead.



Source: Royal Air Force

In London, officials at the Foreign Office said they were aware of the reported video, but offered no further comment.

A spokesman for al-Jazeera said the Green Brigade, from which the station received the video, claimed to be part of the 1920 Revolution Brigade of the National Islamic Resistance in Iraq — a group that first emerged in Iraq's Sunni Triangle in July 2003.

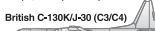
Earlier, a different group, Ansar al-Islam, claimed in a Web statement that its fighters shot down the flight with a missile. It provided no evidence of the claim.

British C-130J/K*

Mission: Movement of personnel and equipment, medevac
British C-130KJ (C1C5)



Length: 97 feet, 9 inches
Wing span: 132 feet, 7 inches
Speed: 174/1400 mph
Crew: 5-6/2-4 pilots
Max. load: 45,000 pounds, 92 troops, or 64 paratroopers



Length: 112 feet, 9 inches
Max. load: 45,000 pounds, 128 troops, or 92 paratroopers
*Model in crash not determined

AP

A spokesman for Britain's Ministry of Defense said earlier he could not confirm Ansar's claim. Capt. David Orwin, a British military spokesman in the southern Iraqi city of Basra, told the Press Association news agency that the crash site was secured by U.S. and British forces, who were investigating.

British Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon said nine British air force personnel and one soldier were missing and believed killed in the crash. One of the troops had joint British-Australian citizenship.

Sharp increase in deaths of U.S. workers in Iraq

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — At least 232 employees of private contractors have been killed in Iraq while working on U.S. military and reconstruction contracts, according to a quarterly report to Congress.

"Iraq's unsettled security environment continues to present grave risks for contractors and employees," said the report released Sunday by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction.

It cited Labor Department figures in reporting that U.S. contractor deaths rose 93 percent during the fourth quarter of 2004 and said attacks on sites, employees and construction projects averaged 22 per week during the quarterly reporting period ended Jan. 5.

The claims were reported to the Labor Department under the Defense Base Act that requires all U.S. government contractors to acquire workers' compensation insurance for employees working in Iraq.

The IG report said the number of claims for workers missing more than four days of work because of injuries rose 61.8 percent in the fourth quarter, to a total of 728 claims.

A U.S. military officer said earlier that wreckage was widely scattered over the site, and military expert Air Vice-Marshall Tony Mason said that may mean the Hercules was shot down.

The wide wreckage area "suggests impact in the air rather than the ground," Mason told the BBC.

Prime Minister Tony Blair paid tribute to the casualties in a televised speech Sunday. "This country and the wider world will never forget them," Blair said.

Britain, America's top ally in the coalition, has 9,000 troops in Iraq, mostly in the south of the country near the city of Basra.

The British military has reported 76 deaths since the war started. The previous deadliest incident for the British came a few days into the invasion, on March 21, 2003, when eight British troops died with four American crewmembers in the crash of a U.S. helicopter in Kuwait.

Guantanamo Bay confinement challenges allowed

BY GINA HOLLAND
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A federal judge ruled Monday that former terror suspects held in Cuba can challenge their confinement in U.S. courts and she criticized the Bush administration for holding hundreds of people without legal rights.

Judge Joyce Hens Green, handing claims filed by about 50 detainees at the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, said the Supreme Court made clear last year that they have constitutional rights that lower courts should enforce.

"Although this nation unquestionably must take strong action under the leadership of the commander in chief to protect itself against enormous and unprecedented threats," she wrote, "that necessity cannot negate the exist-

ence of the most basic fundamental rights which the people of this country have fought and died for well over 200 years."

Green also ruled that hearings set up by the government to determine if the prisoners are "enemy combatants" are unconstitutional. Those hearings, called Combat Status Review Tribunals, had been criticized by civil rights groups because detainees are not represented by lawyers and are

not told of some of the evidence against them—including some information that the judge said may have been obtained by torture or coercion.

"Her opinion sends a message to the rest of the world that democracy is still here," said Barbara Oshansky, an attorney with the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights, which is representing detainees.

The decision conflicts with a

ruling two weeks ago by another federal judge in the same court who considered a similar lawsuit brought by a different group of detainees. U.S. District Judge Richard Leon found last year's Supreme Court ruling did not provide Guantanamo detainees the legal basis to try to win their freedom in American courts.

About 550 detainees are being held at the Navy base, accused of being enemy combatants. The prisoners, all men from 42 countries, were mainly swept up in the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan.

Leon concluded that foreign citizens captured and detained outside the United States have no rights under the Constitution or international law.

Green flatly disagreed. She said detainees may fight their indefinite detentions as a violation of their constitutional due process rights. And some also may have claims that the rights were violated under the Geneva Convention, she said.

In addition, Green said that the government's definition of whom it can detain indefinitely may be too broad. She cited as an example given in an earlier court hearing — "a little old lady in Switzerland who writes a check to what she thinks is a charity that helps orphans in Afghanistan but [what] really is a front to finance al-Qaida activities."

Yokota Baptist Church

Pastor Warren Webster

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IN THE WORLD

Official: 800,000 need food aid post-tsunami

For second day in a row, death toll upped 5,000

BY IRWAN FIRDAUS
The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — Nearly 800,000 people will need food aid in Indonesia's Aceh province in the aftermath of the devastating Dec. 26 tsunami, a leading U.N. official said Monday, as the country's death toll from the disaster jumped by 5,000 for the second day in a row.

Signaling the enduring deprivation five weeks after the catastrophe, the number of destitute being fed by the World Food Program in Aceh — now at 340,000 — was expected to soar as isolated villages are reached and the economic effects of the disaster take root.

"We are talking around 790,000 people" who will be in need of food assistance, WFP Aceh chief Claude Jibidar said.

It was the first time the WFP has put a figure on the number of people seeking food in the province cannot sell cash crops due to disruption in trade networks, or because their food stocks have been shared with refugees.

Just over five weeks after the tsunami disaster, the overall

Mercy on the water: Hospital ship to help humanitarian mission



Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

A Singaporean man points out the hospital ship USNS Mercy to his son as the ship transits the Johor Strait that separates Singapore and Malaysia, just prior to its arrival in Singapore. The Mercy will assist host nations and relief organizations in their humanitarian operations.

death toll stood between 156,000 and 178,000 across 11 nations, with an estimated 26,500 to 142,000 missing, most of whom are presumed dead. The range in estimates reflects differing figures released by separate agencies in worst-hit Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

Indonesia's National Disaster

Relief Coordinating Board said Monday the country's death toll rose by 5,085 — from 103,025 to 108,238 — because additional bodies were found and buried. The agency announced a similar increase on Sunday.

Despite the expected rise in the number of people needing food aid, Jibidar said the WFP was con-

fident it could take over logistical work currently being handled by foreign militaries as they scaled down their presence in the coming weeks and months.

The biggest challenge will be continuing deliveries to western towns and villages that are inaccessible by land because Sumatra island's main coastal road was ruined by the tsunami.

Acehnese rebels make proposal

The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — Acehese rebels said Monday they are willing to put their demand for secession on hold if Indonesia accepts a "face-saving" formula that would allow the tsunami-hit province to hold an independence referendum within five to 10 years.

The two sides held talks over the weekend in the Finnish capital, Helsinki, to consider a possible cease-fire and to reopen a peace process that was broken in May 2003 by the Indonesian military. Both sides have said negotiations will resume later this month.

Tengku Adam, a rebel commander in Aceh who said he had been in touch with rebel negotiators in Scandinavia, said the Indonesian side wanted them to accept an autonomy package before agreeing to a formal cease-fire.

Meanwhile in Jakarta, security minister Widodo Adi Sutopo who led the Indonesian delegation at the Helsinki talks, said the government remained committed to the peace process but would continue with military operations until a permanent solution is agreed on.

Syrian official critical of Auschwitz ceremony

The Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan — A Syrian Cabinet minister has criticized the commemorations of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, accusing the West of double standards for failing to condemn Israel's actions against the Palestinians.

"A moral stand against the killing of people means [we] should not disregard the sufferings of some and focus on others," Buthaina Shaaban, minister of immigrant affairs, wrote in Monday's edition of the newspaper *Al-Awsat*, which is published in London and distributed across the Middle East.

Shaaban, who was Syria's official spokeswoman before being promoted to the Cabinet in 2003, accused the West, the United States in particular, of ignoring what she called Israel's "racist" policies toward the Palestinians. "The pledge that Auschwitz will never happen again should deter all those who entertain racism and hatred," she wrote.



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Lawyers seek war crimes charges for U.S. officials

Request claims acts of torture at Abu Ghraib prison

BY MELISSA EDDY
The Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany — A group of American human rights lawyers asked German prosecutors Monday to investigate U.S. Attorney General nominee Alberto Gonzales on allegations of war crimes as part of a requested probe of U.S. officials' actions in Iraq, the group said.

Attorneys from the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights filed a suit with German federal prosecutors last November charging that U.S. officials, including Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and former CIA director George Tenet, are responsible for acts of torture committed at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

The attorneys said they chose Germany because it has legislation that allows for the prosecution of war crimes and human rights violations across national boundaries. Because the United States is not a member of the International Criminal Court, they could not take their case there.

Documents submitted Monday detail how Gonzales' testimony before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee "implicates him in the war crimes that were committed in Iraq," a group statement said.

The group also submitted an affidavit from a leading U.S. lawyer addressing the issue of primary jurisdiction, stating his views on why there was

little chance a similar criminal investigation would be conducted in the United States.

"It's as strong a case as you can get," attorney Michael Rattiner said in a telephone interview from New York.

The German Federal Prosecutors' office in Karlsruhe did not return phone calls for comment.

German prosecutors have yet to open an official investigation into the original complaint and it was not clear if they would.

Yet Rattiner said prosecutors had requested supporting documents for the original filing much quicker than expected.

"That means to me there is pressure from somewhere," he said.

Such an investigation would further strain U.S.-German relations, which suffered gravely

over Germany's outspoken criticism of the war in Iraq.

German media have already speculated Rumsfeld's decision not to attend an upcoming international security conference in Munich later this month is linked to the case, although officials in Washington insist there has been no final decision on whether the secretary of defense will attend.



Gonzales

Flu sickens pope

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II has the flu, leading him to cancel scheduled audiences Monday, the Vatican said. It was the first time the pope skipped an audience due to illness since September 2003.

The frail 84-year-old pontiff came down with the illness Sunday and doctors advised him to cut back on activities, papal spokesman Josquin Navarro-Valls said. Vatican Radio described it as a mild case.

Kuwait raid kills 5

KUWAIT CITY — Kuwaiti police stormed several suspected terror hideouts Monday, arresting a reputed terror leader and sparking a gunbattle that killed five people, including four of his followers, as a government crackdown on Islamic militants intensified, authorities said.

The fighting, in Mubarak Al Kabir, south of Kuwait City, also wounded three terror suspects and three police officers, officials said.

Three other suspects surrendered during the raid, including Amer Khalaf al-Enezi, a wanted militant leader, authorities said. Al-Enezi is a former mosque preacher described as a mentor to many young militants here.

Militants stranded

Authorities are seeking 23 suspected militants of the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah who are believed stranded in the southern Philippines because they don't have enough money to return to Indonesia, the top police intelligence officer said Monday.

The suspects are believed to have escaped military air raids last week on the hideouts of Muslim militants in southern Maguindanao province, said Robert Delin, the national police's intelligence chief.

He said undercover officers from the military and the police intelligence unit are tracking down the militants, who are

spread out in the central region of the main southern island of Mindanao.

Disidents to be freed

HANOI, Vietnam — Vietnam announced Monday that it would release two of its best-known dissidents from prison following intense pressure from international human rights groups and the United States.

Roman Catholic priest Theodorus Nguyen Van Ly, 58, and physician Nguyen Dan Que, 63, were set to be freed along with 5,323 other prisoners before the Lunar New Year holiday, or Tet, which begins Feb. 9, Vice Foreign Minister Le Van Bang announced at a news conference.

Both have been outspoken advocates of religious freedom and democracy and have openly criticized the government for its poor human rights record. Five other inmates jailed for violating national security laws were also to be released.

Death may curtail calm

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — The killing of a 10-year-old Palestinian girl on Monday as she stood in line in a schoolyard prompted Islamic militants to fire mortar shells at Jewish settlements and endangered an unofficial cease-fire between Israelis and Palestinians.

Although the circumstances of Nouran Deeb's death are unclear, the violence strained the recent atmosphere of goodwill between Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and the new Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas.

Despite the heightened tensions, top Israeli and Palestinian security officials met later Monday to work out the details of a handover of several West Bank towns to Palestinian control.

Deeb was killed in the courtyard of a U.S. school in the Rafah refugee camp. The camp, located near the Egyptian border, is a frequent flashpoint of violence between Israeli troops and Palestinian gunmen.

From The Associated Press

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IN THE STATES

SBC agrees to buy former parent AT&T for \$16 billion

By JAY JORDEN

The Associated Press

DALLAS — SBC Communications Inc. has agreed to buy former parent AT&T Corp. for \$16 billion, creating one of the nation's largest communications companies and ending the independent run of a firm whose roots stretch back to the telephone's invention.

The decision followed late-night meetings by directors of SBC, the nation's second-biggest regional phone company, and the 120-year-old icon AT&T, which gave birth to SBC when its monopoly was broken up in 1984.

SBC spokesman Larry Solomon said elements in the acquisition were signed early Monday after AT&T's board of directors approved the deal. Board members of SBC approved the transaction on Sunday evening.

The acquisition is subject to approvals by shareholders, two federal agencies and at least 26 states, a cumbersome process which prompted the companies to project the deal's completion may take 17 months, an unusually long wait.

San Antonio-based SBC has about 50 million local-telephone customers, mostly in the Midwest and South. It also is a 60 percent owner of Cingular Wireless, which serves more than 46 million wireless customers.

AT&T handled the nation's telephone calls before it was broken apart 21 years ago. The Bedminster, N.J.-based company has 24 million long-distance customers.

SBC Communications to buy AT&T

SBC Communications Inc. has agreed to acquire AT&T Corp. in a \$16 billion deal that would create the nation's largest communication company. The deal is subject to regulatory and shareholder approvals.

SBC Communications Inc.

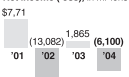
Net income, in millions



2004 Sales: \$40.8 billion

AT&T Corp.

Net income (loss), in millions



2004 Sales: \$30.5 billion

SOURCES: SBC Communications Inc.; AT&T Corp.

AP

In their latest earnings reports for 2004, SBC reported \$40.8 billion in revenue while AT&T reported \$30.5 billion. The combined revenue total of \$71.3 billion would slightly surpass the \$71.2 billion reported for 2004 by Verizon Communications Inc., the nation's biggest phone company.

The companies would not say how many jobs they expect will be cut as a result of the merger, but Rick Lindner, SBC's chief financial officer, said he envisions \$400 million to \$500 million in cost savings by 2009 by consolidating multiple operations from the two businesses.

Shareholders of AT&T, under terms of the agreement, will receive total consideration currently valued at \$19.71 per share, or about \$16 billion. From SBC,

AT&T shareholders will receive 0.77942 shares of the Texas company's common stock for each AT&T common share, in an exchange ratio equaling \$18.41 per share based on SBC's closing stock price on Jan. 28. That amounts to about \$15 billion in stock, Solomon said.

Additionally, AT&T will pay its shareholders a special dividend of \$1.30 per share at the time of closing, totaling about \$1 billion. The stock consideration in the transaction was expected to be tax-free to AT&T shareholders.

"The combination of these two strong, complementary companies will ensure that together we will have all the capabilities necessary to compete successfully in serving a broad range of customers across the country and around the globe," David W. Doran, AT&T chairman and chief executive, said in a statement.

Bush may face more trouble after State of the Union speech

By TAMARA LYTLE

The Orlando Sentinel

WASHINGTON — President Bush will have no problem winning applause and accolades Wednesday when he delivers his State of the Union speech to Congress.

It's the next day that Bush needs to worry about — when the state of political reality sets in.

After a first term in which Bush got much of what he wanted from Congress, lawmakers and political scientists expect a different balance of power now. The reasons include the president's lame-duck status, restlessness by conservatives and the enormous skepticism greeting his attempts to overhaul Social Security.

"There are people in the House who feel like they were pulling a sled uphill at times, feeling like we had to re-elect the president," said Rep. Tom Feeney, R-Ind., of Bush's first four years. Now, Feeney says, "there is more of a sense in Congress it's our responsibility to reset the congressional prerogative."

Bush will not appear on the bal-

lot again, and Vice President Dick Cheney has ruled out running in four years. That means the Republicans who control Congress "don't see their destinies as closely tied to his anymore," said Karen Hull, political scientist at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

During Bush's first term, he galvanized support for the war with Iraq and spearheaded sweeping, controversial changes to civil liberties. He also restructured federal agencies aimed at fighting terrorism, pushed through a massive tax cut and won backing for his No Child Left Behind education reforms.

He had so much success with Congress, in fact, that he never once pulled out his veto pen. The last president to serve a whole term and never issue a veto was Martin Van Buren, from 1837-41.

But now Bush is pressing to re-vamp Social Security and the tax code. He's also seeking billions more in war funding amid a ballooning federal deficit, as well as changes in immigration laws and tort reform. It is an agenda both ambitious and full of potential political land mines.

Dems make pre-emptive rebuttal before address

WASHINGTON — In a pre-emptive strike before President Bush's State of the Union address, Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid called on the administration Monday to outline an exit strategy for Iraq while his House counterpart vowed lasting opposition to Social Security benefits cuts. Reid, from Nevada, also said it would be a mistake to set a deadline for the withdrawal of American forces. "That's not a wise decision because it only empowers those who don't want us there," he said in a joint appearance with House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi of California.

Pelosi largely restated criticism of Bush's plans for Social Security that she and other Democrats have been leveling for days.

"We can solve this long-term challenge without dismantling Social Security and without allowing this administration's false declaration of a crisis justify a privatization plan that is unnecessary," she said.

From The Associated Press

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STARS AND STRIPES

Sentence hearing begins in crematory case

BY HARRY R. WEBER

The Associated Press

LA FAYETTE, Ga. — Former crematory operator Ray Brent Marsh sat in court Monday and listened one by one to the relatives of some of the 334 people whose bodies he left to decay on his property.

"The only question I have for you is

"Why did you do this?"

"There has to be a reason," Randall Jensen,

of Boaz, Ala., asked

Marsh in the court-

room. Jensen's father

was supposed to have

been cremated by

Marsh.

Instead of perform-

ing cremations,

Marsh, former opera-

tor of the Tri-State

Crematory, left bodies

to decay around the property. He gave cement dais to the relatives instead of the ashes of their loved ones.

Marsh nodded along with the first eight relatives to take the stand before his sentencing. Defense lawyer McCracken Poston declined to say if Marsh would speak.

Under the terms of a plea deal, Marsh is expected to be sentenced to up to 12 years in prison followed by lengthy probation.

The court had received at least 244 victim impact statements.

Although only 23 people had signed up to speak, any relatives in the courtroom were allowed to take the stand, court officials said.

No time limit for their statements was given, so the hearing may be continued to Tuesday.

Some relatives traveled from as far away as Indiana and Michigan. At the beginning of the hearing, the judge prepared the families that Marsh cannot be compelled to explain his crime.

"There's been a lot of emotion in this case," District Attorney Herbert Franklin said. "Naturally, there's going to be emotion and that's part of the victim impact statements."

Marsh has pleaded guilty to 787 counts, including theft, abuse of a corpse, burial service fraud and making false statements.

Marsh, 31, also has pleaded guilty to related charges in Tennessee and received a 12-year sentence to run concurrently with the Georgia sentence. He took over the family business in 1997.



Relatives react to testimony Monday during the sentencing proceedings for Ray Brent Marsh in LaFayette, Ga. The former crematory operator is expected to be sentenced to up to 12 years in prison for dumping 334 corpses and passing off cement dais as remains.

Road rage suspected in killing of boy, 14

The Associated Press

DALLAS — Police continued to search for a gunman Monday after a suspected road-rage shooting that left a 14-year-old boy dead and his stepfather wounded. The shooting happened about 2 p.m. Sunday in a shopping center parking lot in the Oak Cliff section of Dallas, about 3 miles west of downtown, police said.

Ruben Juarez, 14, was killed, and his stepfather, Gilbert Garza, 25, was treated at Methodist Dallas Medical Center and later released.

A 14-year-old friend of Ruben's was also in the family's sport-utility vehicle but was not injured.

Witnesses said the two vehicles were traveling in opposite directions when they nearly collided. Garza told Dallas-Fort Worth television station KDFW that he honked at the car, and the other driver honked back.

Dallas police Sgt. Gary Kirkpatrick said the gunman got out, pulled a rifle out of the car and fired a single shot. The bullet went through the driver's-side window, hit Garza, then struck Ruben.

The gunman then drove away. Witnesses said he was driving a silver, beige or champagne-colored car, police said. They believe the attacker's victims were random targets.

"It didn't sound like there was any yelling or screaming between them — it was cold and raining, and their windows were rolled up," Kirkpatrick said.

"He didn't deserve this," said the boy's mother, Mary Juarez.

Woman's illegal status revealed by trip

The Associated Press

LOGAN, Utah — Until she returned from a brief visit to Mexico, Utah State University student Heir Martinez thought she was a 20-year-old legal resident of the United States.

But since being detained by border officials, she has learned she is 18 and an illegal resident.

"When I was in junior high, I felt the way most Americans do about the Mexicans crossing the border," said Martinez. "I felt all the illegal aliens should be deported. My parents would laugh when I said that."

Martinez said she had known one of her parents was a Venezuelan and the other was a German citizen. She understood that she

also was a German citizen, but she had never lived in that country and her family moved to the United States from Venezuela when she was 2. She grew up in a suburb of Salt Lake City.

"Up until I was 12, I thought I was an American," she said. When she found out she wasn't a U.S. citizen, her parents told her she was a legal resident.

"I look like everyone else. I have no accent when I speak English. I know as much U.S. history as the average Joe, if not more. I've been singing the national anthem since my lungs let me and I knew the words," Martinez said. "I've just always felt it — American."

She had a Social Security card from her father. When she asked

about her alien resident card, he told her it was lost, she said.

At USU, she landed a job as a resident assistant in Valley View towers. In October, she attended a conference in New Mexico for resident assistants, and she and the other USU student made a quick trip across the border to Mexico.

When they returned and were questioned by U.S. border agents, she said she was a German citizen. The border officials could not find her listed in a database of permanent foreign residents. She was taken into custody and was told she was in the United States illegally.

"They said, 'Right now we are waiting for your passport to come to deport you. You don't be-

long here, and you have no right to be here,'" Martinez recalled.

Martinez said she tried to call her parents and they hung up on her.

She then contacted a sister and an uncle, who told her the immigration officials were right.

Sen. Orrin Hatch has introduced a bill that would give her an immigrant visa or otherwise make her a legal resident. If the bill doesn't pass, the 18-year-old Martinez will be deported, possibly to Germany or Venezuela.

Meanwhile, she still attends USU, but can't legally work. Though she still carries on with her day-to-day activities, she knows her future is not in her hands.

"Now I realize there's more to each situation," she said. "I see so much more to this picture."

Changes to cost 90,000 students their Pell grants

BY JENNIFER D. JORDAN

The Providence Journal

An estimated 90,000 college students nationwide will lose their federal Pell grants this fall and 1.3 million more will have their awards reduced due to changes the Bush administration has made to the program's eligibility requirements.

In addition, the eligibility changes will have far-reaching effects on students applying for other grants, loans and scholarships because the federal formula is also used to determine state and institutional aid.

Eligibility is decided by a complex formula that takes into account family income, the number of other children enrolled in post-secondary education, and a host of other factors. An estimated 90 percent of families eligible for Pell grants earn less than \$35,000 a year.

Long considered the linchpin of financial aid for millions of needy students, Pell grants gave \$11.6 billion to 4.7 million undergraduate students in 2002-2003. This year, Congress has approved \$12.4 billion for Pell grants to flow to 5.3 million students.

Former U.S. Sen. Claiborne Pell is credited

"These grants have often meant the difference between going to college or not going."

James T. Hanbury

Director of financial aid,
Rhode Island College

with creating the grant program in 1972; it was renamed for the longtime senator from Rhode Island in 1980.

In the 1970s, Pell grants covered about 72 percent of the cost of attending a four-year public college and 35 percent of the cost of attending a private college, according to the American Council on Education. By 2002-2003, their impact had dwindled to 41 percent of the cost of a public-college education, and 16 percent for private colleges.

Nevertheless, college officials say, Pell grants still play an essential role in making higher education more affordable and accessible to students from low-income families.

"These grants have often meant the difference between going to college or not going," said James T. Hanbury, director of financial aid at Rhode Island College. At Rhode Island College, he said, a quarter of the students rely on the grants, which range from \$400 to \$4,050, depending on need.

The Bush administration says the changes in estimating how much families can afford to contribute to college costs were long overdue, as the old formula was based on tax data more than a decade old.

Furthermore, officials note, the program is running a steep deficit — about \$4 billion — due to an unexpected surge in demand. Because the program functions like an entitlement, Pell grants are distributed to all eligible students, even if insufficient funds had been set aside.

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that \$300 million will be saved this year because of the changes, and that the neediest students will see their awards increase by about \$100.

Critics oppose the changes, calling them a "backdoor maneuver" that will force needy students to take out more loans or drop out of college entirely.

Combat death payout could jump to \$250,000

BY ROBERT BURNS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush will propose a dramatic increase to \$250,000 of government payments to families of U.S. troops killed in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and in future combat zones.

The plan to increase the tax-free "death gratuity" now \$124,000 to \$100,000 and provide an extra \$150,000 in life insurance payouts will be part of the 2006 budget proposal submitted to Congress next week, the Pentagon's personnel chief said in an Associated Press interview. Veterans groups

and many in Congress have been pushing for such increases.

"We think the nation ought to make a larger one-time payment, apart from insurance, should you be killed in a combat area of operations," David Chu, the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said in the interview in his Pentagon office.

"We can never, in any program, give someone back their loved one," he added. "There is nothing we can do about the hurt to make it go away. But we can make your circumstances reasonable, in terms of finances."

Chu was to unveil the administration's full proposal in congressional testimony Tuesday.

Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., who is sponsoring a bill with the same provisions, said in an interview that the first-year budget cost of the increased benefits would be \$459 million, including more than \$280 million in retroactive payments of the higher gratuity and extra life insurance settlements.

"The American people want to be generous to the families of service people who give their lives for their country. It's not a nickel-and-dime issue," he said.

In addition to the higher gratuity, the Pentagon would substantially increase life insurance benefits, Chu said. The current \$250,000 coverage offered to all service

members at a subsidized rate under the Servicemans' Group Life Insurance program would be raised to \$400,000, and for troops in a combat zone, the government would pay the premiums on the extra \$150,000 coverage.

Even in the case of a service member who did not participate in the basic life insurance program, the surviving spouse would receive a \$150,000 settlement if the death happened in a designated combat zone, since the Pentagon is proposing to pay the premiums on that amount of coverage for everyone in a war zone. The spouse or other surviving family member also would get the \$100,000 gratuity.

Study: High school students tepid about First Amendment

BY BEN FELLER

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The way many high school students see it, government censorship of newspapers may not be a bad thing, and flag burning is hardly protected free speech.

It turns out the First Amendment is a second-rate issue to

many of those nearing their own adult independence, according to a study of high school attitudes released Monday.

The original amendment to the Constitution is the cornerstone of the way of life in the United States, promising citizens the freedoms of religion, speech, press and assembly.

Yet, when told of the exact text of the First Amendment, more than one in three high school students said it goes "too far" in the rights it guarantees.

Only half of the students said newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of stories.

"These results are not only disturbing, they are dangerous," said Hudding Carter III, president of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, which spon-

sored the \$1 million study.

"Ignorance about the basics of this free society is a danger to our nation's future."

The students are even more restrictive in their views than their elders, the study says.

When asked whether people should be allowed to express unpopular views, 97 percent of teachers and 99 percent of school principals said yes. But 83 percent of students did.

The results reflected indifference with almost three in four students saying they took the First Amendment for granted or didn't know how they felt about it.

It also was clear that many students do not understand what is protected by the Bill of Rights.

Three in four students said flag burning is illegal. It's not.

About half the students said the government can restrict any indecent material on the Internet. It can't.

"Schools don't do enough to teach the First Amendment. Students often don't know the rights it protects," Linda Puntney, executive director of the Journalism

Education Association, said in the report. "This all comes at a time when there is decreasing passion for much of anything. And, you have to be passionate about the First Amendment."

The partners in the project, including organizations of newspaper editors and radio and television news directors, share a clear advocacy for First Amendment issues.

Federal and state officials, meanwhile, have become aware of lack of knowledge of U.S. civics and history among young people. Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., has even pushed through a mandate that schools must teach about the Constitution on Sept. 17, the date it was signed in 1787.

The survey, conducted by researchers at the University of Connecticut, is billed as the largest of its kind. More than 100,000 students, nearly 8,000 teachers and more than 500 administrators at 544 public and private high schools took part in early 2004.

The study suggests that students embrace First Amendment freedoms if they are taught about them and given a chance to practice them, but schools don't make the matter a priority.

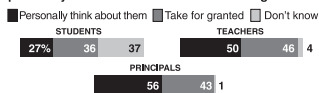
Students who take part in school media activities, such as a student newspaper or TV production, are much more likely to support expression of unpopular views, for example.

About nine in 10 principals said it is important for all students to learn some journalism skills, but

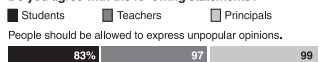
Students unsure of First Amendment

Nearly three-quarters of high school students say they don't know how they feel about the First Amendment or take it for granted, according to a recent survey.

The rights guaranteed by the First Amendment: Do you personally think about them or take them for granted?



Do you agree with the following statements?



Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of stories.



Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics which others may find offensive.



Students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.



NOTE: Project surveyed more than 100,000 high school students, nearly 8,000 teachers and more than 500 administrators and principals at 544 schools across the country.

SOURCE: James L. Knight Foundation

AP

most administrators say a lack of money limits their media efforts.

More than one in five schools offer no student media opportunities; of the high schools that do not offer student newspapers, 40 percent have eliminated them in the last five years.

"The last 15 years have not been a golden era for student media," said Warren Watson, director of the J-Ideas project at Ball State University in Indiana.

"Programs are under siege or dying from neglect. Many students do not get the opportunity to practice our basic freedoms."

Jury selection under way in Michael Jackson case

BY LINDA DEUTSCH

The Associated Press

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — Michael Jackson faced prospective jurors in his child-molestation trial Monday after being greeted by a crowd of fans shouting encouragement and pressing against fences to see the pop star.

Jackson, wearing white and shielded by an umbrella, waved to supporters as he walked into the courthouse.

After more than an hour's wait,

Jackson and his attorney stood and faced the first group of prospective jurors filing into the courtroom. Superior Court Judge Rodney Melville told the prospective panelists they might have to serve for about six months, but that it was an important duty.

"Most of us have relatives who have fought and died to protect this service," he said. "Freedom is not free. Jury duty is part of the cost of freedom."

About 300 prospective jurors were to be screened for hardship

and fill out questionnaires Monday. Another 300 were to be processed Tuesday, followed by 150 more Wednesday. From that pool, the judge hopes to find 12 jurors and eight alternates, but the process could take at least a month.

When Melville asked the first group how many would not seek to be removed from the case at least half raised their hands. He then began questioning prospects who were seeking deferrals of jury service.

Outside the courthouse earlier,

fans danced and sang a Jackson song deriding the district attorney and booed a woman who held a sign bashing the alleged victim. Many had spent the night outside the little courthouse.

Jackson, 46, is charged with molesting a cancer patient — then age 13, now 15 — and plying him with alcohol. On Sunday, Jackson issued a court-approved video statement on his Web site, predicting he would be acquitted.

"Please keep an open mind and let me have my day in court,"

Jackson said, looking directly into the camera. "I deserve a fair trial like every other American citizen. I will be acquitted and vindicated when the truth is told."

His parents also spoke out in his defense Monday before the first got under way, saying the pop star's young accuser was simply after his money.

"I know my son, and this is ridiculous," his mother, Katherine Jackson, said in an interview broadcast on CBS' "The Early Show." She said people who believe her son is guilty "don't know him."

FACES

Eastwood wins Directors Guild award

Clint Eastwood was declared filmmaker of the year by his peers on Saturday, winning the Directors Guild of America honor for the boxing saga "Million Dollar Baby."

The award, held in Beverly Hills, Calif., solidifies Eastwood's prospects to win his second best-director prize at the Academy Awards on Feb. 27. He previously won the Academy Award and guild prize for 1992's "Unforgiven," which also was that year's best-picture champ at the Oscars.

"Million Dollar Baby" stars Eastwood as a curmudgeonly boxing trainer and reluctant mentor to a scrappy fighter (Hilary Swank) who becomes a champion in the ring before her life takes a tragic turn.



Eastwood

Hilton's posse attends masked gala

Hotel chain heiress Paris Hilton attended the San Francisco Ballet's masked ball gala with her parents and an Entertainment Tonight film crew.

The "The Simple Life" star was draped in a necklace of cascading golden South Sea pearls and diamonds designed by San Francisco jeweler Rosalina.

The reality TV series, which started its third season last month, features Hilton and co-star Nicole Richie working in a series of menial jobs.

Other stars attending the event included actors Sean Hayes of NBC's "Will and Grace," Hector Elizondo and television and film director Garry Marshall.

Rock hides out in White House

Comedian Chris Rock says he spent an impromptu tour of the White House hiding from the president.

Rock was filming a movie in Washington a year ago when, during a break, he walked past the White House.

"A black security guard spotted me and took me into the White House," Rock said. "I was walking around the whole White House. It was weird because (President) Bush was there and they were hiding me from Bush."

The 39-year-old actor will host the Oscars for the first time on Feb. 27, giving him the biggest audience of his career to date.



Rock

Beyoncé singer starts clothing line

Beyoncé is planning a new release — her own fashion collection.

The Destiny's Child singer has signed a licensing agreement with the Tarrant Apparel Group to produce a line of clothing for young women. She named the House of Dereon collection after her grandmother Agnes Dereon, who worked as a seamstress.

The first fashions will be in stores this fall, and the look will be "a mix of vintage things with contemporary things. It'll be fur with denim, classic with street," Beyoncé said.

The collection also will include party dresses, sweaters and tailored jackets.

"I have pretty broad taste. I've been all over the world — thank God I've had the chance to do that," the 23-year-old said.



Beyoncé

Osmond's radio show takes the cut

Marie Osmond's five-hour radio show has been canceled after less than a year on the air.

"Marie & Friends," which started in February 2004, featured adult contemporary music and conversation geared toward women. It was Osmond's first foray into radio.

It was dropped by Jones Radio Network, but Salt Lake City-based KBBE, the show's flagship station, said it was negotiating to keep Osmond on the air in some capacity. Reruns of the show continue to air on KBBE each weekday from 2-7 p.m.

Osmond's show was ranked first in the Salt Lake market last summer in the afternoon among female listeners ages 25-54, according to estimates from Arbitron, a media research company.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



For being called a "comeback actor," John Travolta — shown with wife Kelly Preston — believes the saying means "he's keeping up his chops as an artist." In his new movie, "A Love Story for Bobby Long," Travolta plays an alcoholic professor.

The comeback actor

Travolta returns — again! — to the silver screen

BY MIKE SZYMANSKI

Zap2it.com

How many times can you have a comeback? John Travolta smiles when asked if he's irritated when pundits call his latest film, "A Love Story for Bobby Long," his new "comeback movie" like they did when "Pulp Fiction" and "Primary Colors" came around.

"It's an artistic reference — it's not that you don't exist and you're not doing movies," the actor says. "It's this: 'Did you do the movie that appealed to a group of journalists and critics and an audience that says he's an artist? That's all it is. It's not if you've been busy, been working, been starving, it's none of that.'

There's a hidden note that says, 'He's keeping up his chops as an artist.' That's what I gather from it. After big-budget action movies last year in which he played a bad guy (in "The Punisher") and a hero (in "Ladder 49"), this meandering tale set in New Orleans seems quite different for Travolta.

He plays an alcoholic former professor who lives with a young protégé (played by Gabriel Macht) in a house that's suddenly owned by a jaded teen (played by Scarlett Johansson) after her mother dies.

He understands the criticism, and the spotlight when he takes on indie projects like this, saying, "I feel the best when I get to spread my wings as an artist, but sometimes you spread your wings and it's not agreed upon either. It's subjective. As long as I'm still here talking to you, I don't care what you call it."

The two times he was nominated for a best actor Oscar were for "Saturday Night Fever," during the height of the disco era in 1977, and for "Pulp Fiction," during his first "big comeback" in 1994.

Since then, he's been honored for works such as "Get Shorty" and "Primary Colors" and vilified for "Domestic Disturbance" and "Battlefield Earth."

"The (American) Cinematheque did a tribute to me nine years ago," says the 50-year-old actor. "I think that once you've hit 40 and you've been around since 12 doing mov-

ies, there's no choice but to do some sort of tribute. It doesn't make me feel older and broken like my character in 'Bobby Long.'"

First-time director Shaine Gabel worried about working with such a star, saying, "John is the 800-pound gorilla, but he didn't act that way on the set. He was always equal with everyone else."

Travolta insists, "Often in the tiny movies you get to stretch the most. I mean, I've had the good luck of stretching even in big studio movies as in 'Primary Colors' or 'A Civil Action.' But where you get to take the most chances is often in these independent movies. Life and living it contributed to this character. I couldn't have done it at 23. That's the luxury of getting older, you get to be more right in characters."

Travolta says he's met plenty of people like Bobby Long, and that was his idea to whiten his hair prematurely. "I've been on the receiving end of an alcoholic where they're wicked to you and the unintended verbiage that comes out of their heads and you go, 'Whoa, but he's also bright, and very poetic,'" he says.

Dressed in all black — V-neck shirt, jacket and pants and close-cropped hair — he adds, "It's all about how you look, too. Imagine if I looked the way that I look now in 'Pulp Fiction.' It would've been a harder sell."

When he first met Macht and Johansson, Travolta took them out for a shot of whiskey and a round of pool so they could get friendly. "He was great on the set, singing show tunes, telling stories," Macht says.

"I remember first seeing him in 'Grease' and saying, 'I want to do what that guy does.'"

Travolta gave his young co-stars homework, just like the professor he plays. When quotes from Robert Frost or T.S. Eliot were cited in the film, the superstar looked them up and handed out information sheets. "I did research and would say, 'OK, we're doing these quotes tomorrow. Is everyone familiar with them?'"

"I think that the story mostly says that broken people can be helpful, that they have something to offer," Travolta says. "But you learn that regardless of how broken they are, there might still be something there for each other."

OPINION

Iraq election 'gives us all reason to hope'

The Dallas Morning News

Here is what did not happen in Iraq on Sunday: the mass murder of voters promised by insurgents.

Here is what did happen: Men and women who have lived under tyranny for as long as they can remember risked their very lives to vote.

Here is the unexpectedly good news: All things considered, it was a magnificent day in Iraq.

Iraqis had been warned last week by the cutthroat Abu Musab al-Zarqawi that they would pay with their own blood if they dared to vote. Said the terrorist chieftain, "We have declared a bitter war against the principle of democracy and all those who seek to enact it." The choice could hardly have been clearer: democracy or religious fascism. Defying the killers, most Iraqis had the courage to choose democracy.

What a beautiful thing.

Let's not fool ourselves: We've all got a long way to go in Iraq, and the road ahead is fraught with peril. Sunday's election was not an end in itself, but the means to a future Iraq that is governed democratically and ruled by law. Achieving that won't be easy.

Al-Zarqawi and his men will not now pick up their bombs and go home. Many minority Sunnis stayed away from the polls, either from pique or sheer fright, which will make it difficult for newly elected leaders to forge a working government. And given the region's religious and tribal tensions, and history of absolutist regimes, instituting any governing system with checks and balances, and guaranteed protection for minority rights, won't be easy. Civil war is still a real possibility.

Nevertheless, the Shiites, who will dominate the incoming government, have promised to include their resalcitrant Sunni counterparts in the writing of the country's permanent constitution, which is the task confronting the country's new rulers in advance of the National Assembly elections in December. And the popular enthusiasm on the streets from Baghdad to Basra suggests that maybe, just maybe, the Iraqi military will now have a government for which it's willing to fight.

For once in a very long time, the news from Iraq gives us all reason to hope. The struggle for a more perfect liberty never ends, but for now let us savor the moment and congratulate both the Iraqi people and the American soldiers who helped win for them the gift of that extraordinary thing in human history: the vote.



U.S. Army Spc. Luke Saunders — who is with the 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion and is from Green Bay, Wis. — dances with Iraqi policemen as they celebrate the arrival of a convoy of ballots from a polling station to a central collection point in Baghdad on Monday. Iraqi and American forces escorted election officials, ballots and tally sheets to central collection points for tabulation of Sunday's landmark election.

With promise of success comes chance for failure

The Baltimore Sun

The apparent heavy turnout in (Sunday's) Iraqi elections was heartening to anyone who wishes to see that country back on its feet with an end both to violence and to armies of occupation. With no little courage, the Iraqi people showed a determination to take affairs into their own hands. Yet President Bush's declaration that the elections were a success is premature, at best. The turnout was a success; the elections won't be a success until it is clear what flows from them.

First, it is worth pointing out that a death toll of at least 40 makes this something other than a typical voting day. The insurgents failed to convulse the country in violence, but to call that, therefore, a success is setting the bar a little low. Second, the ex-

The insurgents failed to convulse the country in violence, but to call that, therefore, a success is setting the bar a little low.

tent of the Sunni boycott is difficult to judge at this point; if it was widespread, that poses a thorny problem: An Iraqi assembly can't pretend that the most disaffected 20 percent of the population simply doesn't exist. Those Iraqis who went to the polls were repudiating the insurgency, but an unintended consequence of the election may be to launch a civil war in its stead.

Nonetheless, yesterday's election offers potentially significant opportunities to build a happier Iraq. Millions of people, despite threats of violence, turned out to be heard — and in so doing they presented a ringing affirmation of democracy. There lies the hope, and the trap.

The question, for those in charge in Baghdad and in Washington, will be to figure



Post-election celebration notwithstanding, Monday was just another day in Iraq for this U.S. Army sniper as he scanned the horizon through his rifle scope during a raid on insurgent targets in Mosul. As jubilant Iraqis sifted through ballots, the issue of how and when the 150,000 American troops currently in Iraq will depart is not yet resolved.

out what those millions of people thought they were voting for. Some significant portion saw casting a ballot as a way of bring-

ing the U.S. occupation closer to an end. Some may be expecting a theocratic government; others, the reverse. The Kurds

clearly expect to be left alone by the Shiite majority.

If the new Iraqi assembly can deliver on most of those expectations (some of which, of course, contradict others), the people's show of faith will have been reciprocated and Iraq will be well on its way to better times. An engaged and motivated majority can prevail over a disaffected minority — and can do so without the help of thousands of occupying troops.

That's not to say that we expect President Bush to declare today that U.S. forces can withdraw, however optimistically he describes the election. But the balloting does hold out the possibility that Iraqis will, in fact, be able to assume control of their own fate, and, sooner rather than later, the Americans can come home.

None of this, though, will be easy, particularly as the violence is likely to continue for now. The experience of Eastern Europe following the collapse of communism suggests that nothing is as corrosive as the cynicism that sets in once a (sometimes naïve) belief in the powers of democracy has been dashed. If the Iraqi people feel they have been let down in the months to come — by politics, by imams, by the Bush administration — they won't look back on this election as a success. And they'll be unlikely to have faith in another one.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



Fans will rest easier knowing that while the game may feature ex-felons, wife-beaters and drug addicts...



Meat plant report

NC RALEIGH — Working conditions at three U.S. meat processing plants — in North Carolina, Nebraska and Arkansas — violate basic human rights, according to a Human Rights Watch report.

The report, released after a year of research, is based on interviews with employees and managers at a Nebraska Beef factory, a Tyson Foods chicken plant in Arkansas and the Smithfield Packing Co. pork plant in Tar Heel, about 100 miles south of Raleigh. It says workers at all three plants are frequently injured, then refused medical care or fired.

The report found that repetitive motion injuries are universal in the industry; unsanitary conditions sometimes leave workers covered in animal urine and feces; and attempts to unionize are sometimes violently quashed.

The American Meat Institute called the report "way off the mark."

Hidden danger in tea?

MO ST. LOUIS — Instant tea may be a source of harmful levels of fluoride that can lead to bone pain, researchers discovered after they looked into the case of a woman who drank one to two gallons of super-strength tea daily.

Scientists say it's not the country's biggest dietary problem.

But it does make the point "all things in moderation," said lead researcher Dr. Michael Whyte of the Washington University School of Medicine.

He said the study tested 10 brands of instant tea at regular-strength levels in fluoride-free water; they didn't test brewed or bottled tea. Fluoride levels ranged from 1.0 to 6.5 parts per million. The maximum level allowed in drinking water by the Environmental Protection Agency is 4 ppm.

Record-high immigration

NY NEW YORK — A new report from the city says New York's immigrant population is at a record high, represents a significant percentage of the city's workforce and has offset population losses over recent decades.

The 265-page analysis titled "The Newest New Yorkers 2000: Immigrant New York in the New Millennium," set to be released by the City Planning Department, shows that the immigrant population is larger than ever before, despite the city being long known as a haven for newcomers to the country. The New York Times reported.

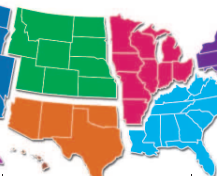
Bat bill passes House

VA RICHMOND — A bill recognizing the Virginia big-eared bat as the official state bat swooped through the House of Delegates with no debate.

The House voted 87-8 to pass Del. Jackie Stump's bill and send it to the Senate.

Corynorhinus townsendii virginianus is the scientific name of the endangered species, which is found only in a few caves in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky and North Carolina.

Stump, D-Buchanan, said recognition of the big-eared bat would help educate the public about Vir-



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

ginia's caves and the positive environmental role played by the insect-eating flying mammals that inhabit them.

Selling home to avoid jail

NH NASHUA — A Hollis man has agreed to sell his house to avoid going to jail.

Peter Campin, 38, was charged with burglary for a noisy break-in into a neighbor's home but pleaded guilty to criminal trespass and agreed to leave his house and sell it within 10 days.

Prosecutors said a highly intoxicated Campin jumped from his second-floor window, crashed through his neighbor's door across the street and started screaming and banging his chest.

"The homeowner had a gun," Police Chief Richard Darling said.

"A couple of shots went off, and the homeowner was able to get him down on the ground until police arrived."

Drug tests for officials

NM SANTA FE — A lawmaker wants New Mexico to require yearly random drug testing of all its elected officials, from school board members to U.S. senators, with results posted on the Internet.

"I think we need to remember that we are public servants. We're

not royalty," Republican state Sen. Steve Komadina said.

His bill was prompted by last year's drug-related arrests of a prominent New Mexico judge and a public utilities commissioner.

Tim Storey, a senior fellow at the National Conference of State Legislatures, said he knew of no other state that requires such testing.

Visa fraud scheme

FL MIAMI — A former employee at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City was sentenced for conspiring with a Colombian couple in a visa bribery scheme that allowed about 180 cartel members and leftist guerrillas to receive documented visas.

Julietta Quiroz, a naturalized U.S. citizen from Nicaragua, received one year and one day in prison, along with two years of supervised release, community service and fines.

Nextel's too-tall tower

VT ST. JOHNSBURY — A cellular phone company must lower its proposed communications tower in Waterford, the District 7 environmental board has said.

Members of the board told Nextel Communications Inc. to shorten the proposed 140-foot tower if it wants to gain ATC 250 approval.

"One of the things we found out with the original towers, was that between 70 and 120 feet, there wasn't much of a (signal propagation) loss," said District 7 coordinator Charles Gallagher, referring to applications submitted by ATC Realty a couple of years ago. "At the end of the day, they accepted lower towers."

Vegas stench solved

NV LAS VEGAS — Pipe-roboting robots fitted with cameras have discovered the source of the awful smell that has plagued downtown Las Vegas for a decade.

Construction debris that got backed up in the storm drain system trapped stagnant water and bits of rotting trash, creating what has been called the "Stench of Fremont Street," city officials said.

"It was critical that we find this for business and tourism," Mayor Oscar Goodman said. "This smell turns people off, including me."

After years of trying to cover up the stink with deodorizer, city officials conducted a \$97,000 investigation to track down the source of the smell. Now they have to figure out how best to remove the trapped bits of concrete, gravel and trash.

Can goes with robber

WV MARTINSBURG — Maybe he needed something to hold the loot.

A man who broke into a gas station and convenience store took the trash can when he left, said Lt. K.C. Bohrer of the Berkeley County Sheriff's Department.

Surveillance cameras in ROC's gas station show the man entering the rear of the store, then stealing cash, cartons of cigarettes, soda and the trash can, Bohrer said.

Deputies have released a still image from the surveillance video to media in hopes the public can help identify him.



Ella Jane, 2, takes a bite of the fresh snow in Blowing Rock, N.C.

Tasting the snow



Push is on

From left, Ryan Turner, Stephen Janssen, Angelo Bruno and Bowman Guhan, all from Mobile, Ala., make a snowman on the Mall in Washington.



Holiday festivities

Peagan Lin performs "The Light with Blossom Flowers" during a celebration of the Chinese New Year at First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, Mo.



Mardi Gras time

Norma Klecka wears a mask during the 11th annual Z Krewé procession during Mardi Gras in Galveston, Texas.



Having a ball

Allison Gold, 6, pushes a large ball in an obstacle course in Kirtland, Ohio, as part of the Lake Metroparks Winterfest at Chapin Forest Pine Lodge.



Fastest cart wins

Competitors in the Idiotarod make it to the finish line pushing their shopping cart in New York. In a spoof of the famous Alaskan Iditarod, the Idiotarod pitted dozens of teams of runners who must push and pull a shopping cart from Brooklyn to the Lower East Side in Manhattan.



Off to the races

Keith Self and his four Siberian Huskies start the 4-dog Siberian class sled dog race at Punderson State Park in Newbury Township, Ohio.

Firefighters suspended

CA SACRAMENTO — Four firefighters have been suspended for participating in a series of sexual encounters with each other while on duty.

The four, who were placed on paid administrative leave, are the subjects of an internal investigation for what Fire Chief Julius Cherry described as "on-duty consensual sexual misconduct" during their 24-hour work shifts.

The three separate incidents at the fire station involved a male captain, two male firefighters and a female firefighter. One of the men would stand lookout while the other three engaged in sex acts, fire officials said.

Teen dies of cancer

FL BELL — A 17-year-old girl who was honored by Gov. Jeb Bush when she fulfilled her dream by graduating from high school despite a long, painful battle with brain cancer has died, her guidance counselor said.

Caitlin Huggins died at her home, Dana Jones said. Huggins was diagnosed with cancer in 2001, the summer before her freshman year. There were periods of remission, but three new tumors were discovered the day before this school year began and there was nothing her doctor could do to save her life. Doctors in September gave her a month to live.

Landlord jailed for attack

NY NEW YORK — A Queens landlord was sentenced to 4½ years to life in prison after being convicted of hiring hit men to force two brothers out of a rent-controlled apartment.

Juan Basagotia, 50, was accused of paying two tenants in the building \$2,500 to beat the brothers and attack them with a knife in March 2003. He allegedly wanted to oust the victims from their three-bedroom, \$400-a-month apartment in the Elmhurst section of Queens so he could raise the rent to \$1,500.

The brothers, William and David Lavery, suffered disfiguring injuries in the attack but survived. They attended Basagotia's sentencing in State Supreme Court in Queens.

The two attackers, David Robles and Danny Machuca, were found guilty in separate trials last year.

Wind farm concerns

AR FLAGSTAFF — A proposed wind farm could supply enough electricity to power two-thirds of the homes in Flagstaff, but county planners aren't sold on the aesthetics of the project. The biggest concern is how the 405-foot-tall windmills would obstruct views of the San Francisco Peaks. The wind farm is planned for land leased from the Hopi Tribe and private landowners about 35 miles east of Flagstaff.

School name rethought

GA CANTON — A school board voted to halt plans to name a new high school after a Confederate-era governor, under pressure from students and parents who said they did not want to honor someone who supported slavery.

The Cherokee County board sent the matter of naming the

school back to a committee of faculty and students, which already has said it wants to name the school Creekland High.

The board previously had voted to name the high school after former Gov. Joseph E. Brown, a four-term governor from 1857-65 who made his home in Cherokee County.

"The community felt disenfranchised and the board listened," Mike Chapman, the school board chairman, said after the latest vote.

He said the committee will come back to the board with a new recommendation for a school name. The board is expected to vote again Feb. 17.

Students wearing T-shirts saying "No to Joe" continued their campaign against naming the school for Brown.

Family coverage request

OK OKLAHOMA CITY — Gov. Brad Henry says he doesn't know if the state can afford a request by the Oklahoma Education Association that the state pay at least part of the health insurance coverage for teachers' spouses and dependents. Beginning this year, the state is paying 100 percent of teachers' individual premiums, \$314 a month. A teacher with a spouse and two children pays about \$700 a month for health insurance.

Climber recounts ordeal

CO DENVER — Jamn Camp tied a thermal top around his bloody head and wriggled for miles with broken limbs to survive in the frigid terrain.

"There was so much blood, I didn't know how long I'd be conscious. I thought I had 20 to 30 minutes left," said the climber, wheeled from intensive care to a news conference.

The bandaged 27-year-old recounted the tale of his fall on Longs Peak in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Without a helmet, Camp plummeted 100 feet. The fall left him with broken wrists, a broken kneecap and punctures to his head.

"I don't remember losing my balance," he said. "I think I was hit by falling ice. I remember swinging, trying to get a hold of things. I couldn't."

Ten attacks woman, 70

VA COLONIAL BEACH — A 70-year-old woman remained hospitalized three days after police say she was stabbed repeatedly in her home by a 15-year-old neighborhood acquaintance.

The woman was in critical but stable condition at Inova Fairfax Hospital after suffering from a collapsed lung and torn intestines, Police Chief Courtland Turner said. The woman's spleen was also removed, he said.

The woman, who lives alone, let the teen into her house after he offered to check on her frozen water pipes, police said. Once inside, he attacked her with a long-bladed butcher's knife.

The assailant, who lives in the woman's neighborhood, apparently made a sexual advance toward the woman and was rejected, which may have prompted the attack, Turner said.

Stories and photos from wire services

Horoscope

This Groundhog Day, the moon in its last quarter says, "Let's try something new before the season is over!" The innovative placement of Mercury nods in approval, and beautiful Venus joins the effort by stepping into Aquarius. Now, there are four luminaries in the altruistic, forward-thinking sign and hardly an excuse left to stay stuck in the past.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

FEBRUARY 2. It's a year for making wonderful improvements! Home remodeling and renovation are featured. Romance, your body and even your wardrobe gets a boost in the late spring as your whole attitude lightens up. Investigate a career move through June. There's more money to be made by working in a different way or for a different company.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

You're incredibly productive, making the most of your time and resources. Run your errands early, and get ahead in life! It's a fabulous time to start a diet, get a haircut and get your annual checkup. You're on a roll.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Your passion, for a creative project or another person, is charging ahead at full throttle. Have fun, but try to avoid clouding your judgment with over-enthusiasm. This is a time to keep your feet planted on terra firma.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

You've been so busy lately that you've hardly been at home! Plants and pets could use some extra TLC. While you're at it, why not get your place clean and presentable? An unexpected guest arrives shortly.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

Make an effort to reach out to a sibling, cousin or close friend who may be going through a difficult time. Your nurturing spirit and killer chicken soup are sure to brighten anyone's day.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Lions love to make a dramatic entrance, but before you whip out that credit card to buy some shiny new

clothes, know that a bit of thrift is in order. Avoid debt by dipping into someone else's wardrobe. Friends love to share.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Emotions run hot. Putting on your game face and kicking down the proverbial doors is one way to deal. Another is to do the exact opposite — stay in, chill out, meditate. Why not give your mom a call?

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

Get a better understanding of your true strengths. Knowing where your power lies and how best to use it will help you make an important decision. Interview your own heart. Intuition is your best ally.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

While the scorpion is a solitary creature that treasures his privacy, romance can be found if you venture out of your comfort zone and seek new alliances. Joining a yoga or martial arts class satisfies your body and soul.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Your day-to-day work routine is probably more hectic than you'd like. Make the drudgery more fun by rewarding yourself at the end of each task. Use your famous creativity. And remember: This too shall pass.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

No sooner have you accomplished one thing than you're looking for a new mountain to climb! Think about going back to school to further your career. Another good bet is taking up a new sport.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Doctors and lawyers and accountants — oh my! You may need to consult a professional in a matter related to health or money. But don't worry — it's all good. Expert advice doesn't come cheap, but peace of mind is priceless.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

A long-term relationship or business partnership could do with a breath of fresh air. Sweep away your stale routine by suggesting a weekend retreat. The change of venue will revive your sense of play and whimsy.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



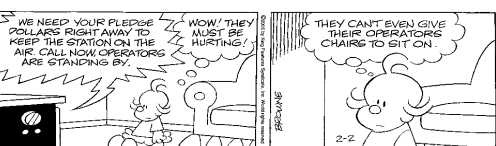
Zits



Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red Rover



Better or Worse



Peanuts



Don't overlook prostate checks

Dear Abby: Because your column is like a huge community billboard, I thought I'd ask you to get this message out.

Please remind women that when they schedule themselves for a mammogram, they should schedule their husbands for a prostate exam and PSA test.

There's an abundance of advertising about the importance of breast exams, yearly checkups and women's health centers, but little is seen about the same thing for men. Prostate cancer is a serious problem if it's not detected before the symptoms show up, by then it's already spreading outside the prostate. You know that men put off medical visits more often than women, so if you could get women involved in our health we might be around a lot longer.

As a prostate cancer survivor, I know from personal experience that early-stage prostate cancer has no symptoms and, having been cancer-free for the past six

years, I am living proof that early prostate cancer can be cured. — **Alvin and Kicken** in Knoxville, Tenn.

Dear Alvin and Kicken: You have written an important letter. Many men, and women too, will appreciate your timely reminder.

My mother was once asked what she thought was the most important ingredient for a lasting marriage. Her response: "A husband who lasts." Ladies, if you want your husband to last, improve the odds by making an appointment with his doctor every year.

Dear Abby



Dear Abby: I am a 19-year-old young man who is writing you from a jail cell. None of my crimes were violent. They mainly consisted of theft and drugs. I've had a bad drug problem ever since my best friend overdosed in my hotel room.

I did drugs before then, but not as much as afterward.

One thing led to another, and soon I found myself behind the

wheel of other people's cars and using other people's credit cards. I have been locked up for three months now, and looking back, I can't believe the life I was living. Is there still a chance I can turn my life into a success when I'm released? And what do you recommend I do to stay sober and lead a happy life?

Tough Luck in Chattanooga
Dear Tough Luck: You may still achieve success, but it will be harder.

Some positive steps to take: Join a 12-step support group; people with problems who need emotional support accomplish more than they can on their own. Understand that you will have to grow relationships with people who use drugs and steal. Complete your education.

It won't be easy, but if you do all of the above, you'll no longer be the same person you are today, and you will lead a happier life with fewer problems.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can email to Abby on the Internet at: <http://www.ueexpress.com/dearabby> Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LIPUP
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

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YUNTI
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

ENGALT
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SHEERY
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Answer:

Yesterday's Jumbles: CHAIR TULLE FLURRY PURITY

Answer: What the surgeon turned into at the annual roast — A REAL CUT UP

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argrison



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Checklist for alcoholic issues

Dear Annie: Any time the subject of alcohol comes up, you are quick to use the label "alcoholic" and suggest immediate help. I am a 41-year-old man, recently divorced. My wife claimed my drinking was a problem, but I disagree. I am a responsible drinker. I work hard, do volunteer work and have a peaceful, busy life. I never drink and drive, and have never been involved in a confrontation while drinking.

There are times when I drink every day for a week, and other times when I will not drink at all for a month or two.

I have no desire to change my behavior, because I am not aware of a single problem caused by my drinking. Would you call me an alcoholic and recommend that I seek treatment?

— **Curious in Tucson, Ariz.**

Dear Tucson: Only you can decide if you have a problem, but we follow the following questionnaire from AA. Most helpful: 1. Have you ever decided to stop

Annie's Mailbox



drinking for a week or so, but only lasted for a couple of days? 2. Do you wish people would mind their own business about your drinking and stop telling you what to do? 3. Have you ever switched from one kind of drink to another in the hope that this would keep you from getting drunk? 4. Have you had to have an eye-opener upon awakening during the past year? 5. Do you envy people who can drink without getting into trouble? 6. Have you had problems connected with drinking during the past year? 7. Has your drinking caused trouble at home? 8. Do you ever try to get "extra" drinks at a party because you do not get enough? 9. Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking anytime you want to, even though you keep getting drunk when you don't mean to? 10. Have you missed days of work or school because of drinking? 11. Do you have "blackouts"? 12. Have you ever felt that your life would be better if you did not drink? If you answered YES four or more times,

you probably have an alcohol problem and might want to check out AA. (alcoholics-anonymous.org).

Dear Annie: My husband and I received a group e-mail inviting us to a birthday party for an acquaintance. The man's wife suggested that everyone bring a card with \$5-\$20 inside, so the birthday boy can buy a mountain bike he desperately wants. Of course, she said we shouldn't feel obligated.

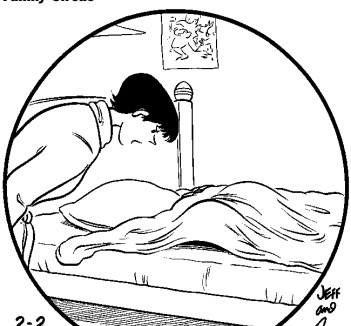
We don't know this couple very well, and we already have plans that weekend and will miss the party. But isn't this tacky?

— **Anonymous**
Dear Anonymous: Unless asked, it is inappropriate to tell people what they should give as a gift, and extraordinarily tacky to tell them how much to spend. Good thing you had other plans.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Neil Mitchell and Margy Sargent, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniemailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



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"You are NOT Punxsutawney Phil and you didn't see your shadow! Now get dressed for school."

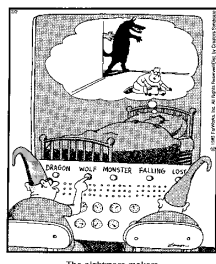


Dennis the Menace



© Gary Larson

The Far Side



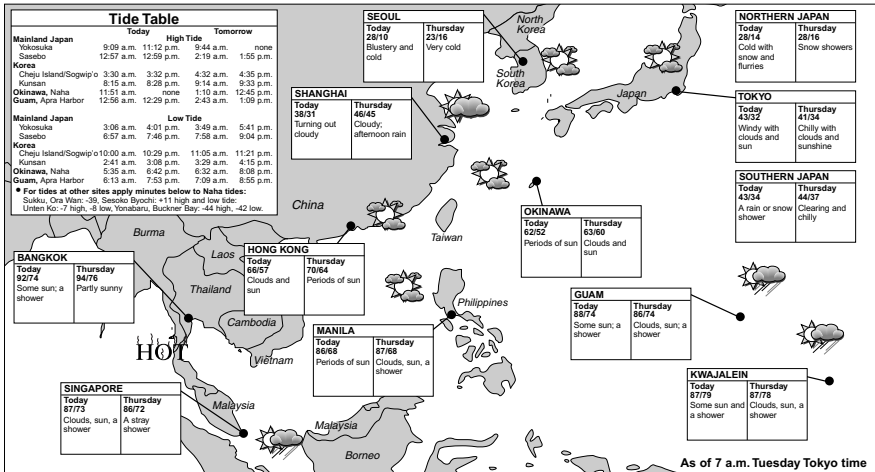
Non Sequitur



The Pacific Forecast

AccuWeather.com

Forecasts and graphics, provided
by AccuWeather.com ©2005



Extended Forecasts

TOKYO
Friday: Partly sunny,
high 45, low 36.
Saturday: Periods of clouds and
sunshine,
high 48, low 32.

KADENA
Friday: Showers,
high 75, low 69.
Saturday: Showers,
high 75, low 65.

SEOUL
Friday: Partly sunny,
high 28, low 18.
Saturday: Partly sunny,
high 32, low 19.

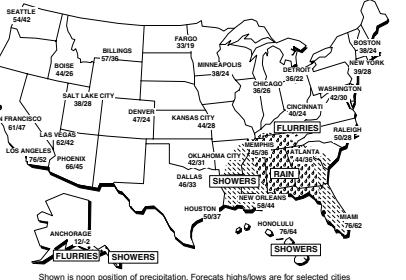
MANILA
Friday: Partly sunny,
high 85, low 68.
Saturday: Partly sunny,
high 86, low 70.

HAGATNA
Friday: Showers,
high 86, low 73.
Saturday: Showers,
high 85, low 74.

Monday's USA Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Albuquerque	44/25	Los Angeles	74/47
Anaheim	39/20	Little Rock	43/34
Asheville	34/27	Louisville	75/59
Baltimore	38/18	Miami	73/59
Birmingham	50/38	Milwaukee	36/32
Boston	45/28	Minneapolis	43/25
Boise	46/26	New York	67/48
Boston	31/20	Omaha	37/27
Brownsville	72/50	Orlando	68/48
Buffalo	32/21	Philadelphia	37/20
Burlington	24/4	Pittsburgh	37/16
Charleston, SC	53/35	Portland, OR	55/38
Charlotte	49/30	Portland, ME	50/37
Chicago	39/24	Portland, ME	50/37
Columbus, OH	37/16	St. Louis	40/25
Dallas	34/22	San Antonio	46/40
Denver	32/20	San Diego	67/42
Des Moines	48/29	San Juan	81/64
Helena	43/25	Tampa	70/51
Indianapolis	35/21	Tulsa	41/26
Jacksonville	39/20	Washington, DC	67/42
Kansas City	36/25	Wichita	37/26

Wednesday, February 02



U.S. Extended Forecast

Low pressure over the northern Gulf of Mexico Wednesday will lead to wet weather in southeastern Texas and much of the lower Mississippi Valley. Meanwhile, a large area of high pressure over the Rockies will promote dry and mild conditions from the West Coast into the Plains. Another high pressure system will be found over the Northeast; sunny and tranquil weather will be the rule from New England southward to the mid-Atlantic states. Temperatures will be near seasonal averages. Low pressure will track through Florida Thursday, leading to rainy conditions from the Carolinas southward through the Sunshine State. The rest of the country will be quiet with very little precipitation expected.

Wednesday's Pacific Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Bangkok	92/74	Iwakuni	41/27	Sasebo NB	42/30
Beijing	30/14	Kadena AB	62/52	Sapporo	28/14
Camp Casey	28/7	Kadena AB	62/52	Seoul	11/0
Christchurch	72/54	Kwajalein	37/19	Shanghai	38/31
Diego Garcia	87/77	Manila	86/68	Singapore	87/73
Hagelsta	88/74	Misawa AB	32/16	Sydney	88/59
Hanoi	28/11	Osan	26/9	Taegu	35/18
Hong Kong	66/07	Pertti	83/66	Taipei	35/18
Honolulu	72/64	Pusan	35/21	Tokyo	43/32

Wednesday's World Temperatures

HIGHLOW	CITY	HIGHLOW	CITY	HIGHLOW	CITY	HIGHLOW
90/72	Budapest	33/21	Kabul	43/17	Nairobi	88/57
54/34	Buenos Aires	77/59	Kiev	25/16	New Delhi	70/43
76/63	Cairo	66/42	Kuwait	74/51	Oslo	40/25
61/39	Cancun	82/65	London	46/39	Paris	43/34
85/69	Cape Town	88/60	Madrid	52/34	Rio de Janeiro	82/65
49/36	Geneva	36/27	Mexico City	70/48	Rome	45/36
41/33	Istanbul	41/30	Montreal	32/17	St. Petersburg	16/10
62/57	Jerusalem	54/48	Mogadishu	91/76	Stockholm	35/26
44/34	Johannesburg	83/62	Moscow	23/12	Warsaw	32/21



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SCOREBOARD

AFL TV & Radio

Wednesday

AFL Sports, 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Extreme Games: Winter X Games IX (6-10).

AFL Sports, 9 p.m. College basketball: Miami (Ind.) at Atlantic; 9 a.m.-College basketball: Illinois at Michigan State.

AFL Sports, 9 p.m. College basketball: Florida at Mississippi State.

AFL Sports, 9 p.m. College basketball: Winter X Games IX.

AFL Sports, 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Cleveland at Orlando (Ind.).

AFL Sports, 9 p.m. College basketball: Illinois at Michigan State.

AFL Sports, 9 p.m. College basketball: Winter X Games IX.

Thursday

AFL Sports, 9 a.m.-NBA: Phoenix at Memphis (Ind.).

AFL Sports, 9 a.m.-College basketball: Cincinnati at Louisville.

AFL Sports, 9 a.m.-NBA: Phoenix at Minnesota.

AFL Sports, 11 a.m.-College basketball: Wake at Wake Forest.

AFL Sports, 5 p.m.-NBA: Houston at Philadelphia (Ind.).

AFL Sports, 9 p.m. College basketball: Arkansas at South Carolina (Ind.).

All times are Japan and Korea Standard Time. Broadcasts subject to change. Visit www.nfl.com for more information.

Pro football

NFL playoffs

Wild-card playoffs

St. Louis 27, Seattle 20

San Diego 17, OT

Sunday, Jan. 9

Indianapolis 49, Denver 19

Minnesota 31, Green Bay 19

Divisional playoffs

Pittsburgh 26, N.Y. Jets 17, OT

Atlanta 47, St. Louis 17

Philadelphia 27, Minnesota 14

New England 27, San Diego 17

Conference Championships

Sunday, Jan. 9

Philadelphia 27, Atlanta 10

New England 41, Pittsburgh 27

Super Bowl XXXIV

Saturday, Jan. 8

Indianapolis 24, Jacksonville, Fla. 16

Philadelphia vs. New England

College basketball

AP Men's Top 25 rated

Sunday

Illinois (21-1) did not play. Next: No. 15 Michigan State, Tuesday.

Next: No. 17 Virginia Tech, Tuesday.

Next: No. 12 Georgetown, Tuesday.

Next: No. 10 Wake Forest, Wednesday.

Next: No. 11 Duke, Wednesday.

Next: No. 14 North Carolina, Thursday.

Next: No. 16 Kentucky, Thursday.

Next: No. 20 Duke, Thursday.

Next: No. 18 Arizona State, Thursday.

Next: No. 22 Virginia Tech, Thursday.

Next: No. 19 Wake Forest, Thursday.

Next: No. 21 North Carolina, Thursday.

Next: No. 13 Duke, Thursday.

Next: No. 10 Wake Forest, Thursday.

Next: No. 11 Duke, Thursday.

Next: No. 12 Georgetown, Thursday.

Next: No. 13 Duke, Thursday.

Next: No. 14 North Carolina, Thursday.

Next: No. 15 Michigan State, Thursday.

Next: No. 16 Kentucky, Thursday.

Next: No. 17 Virginia Tech, Thursday.

Next: No. 18 Arizona State, Thursday.

Navy 66, Bucknell 62

Virginia 64, Loyola, Md. 73

Northwestern 66, Brigham Young 59

Vermont 75, Hartford 55

Washington, Mo., 68, BYU 68

SOUTH

Alabama 75, Georgia Tech 67

Averett 78, Chowh 70

Florida 75, Virginia Tech 67

Georgia Tech 67, Virginia Tech 67

Indiana 75, Virginia Tech 67

Marshall 75, Virginia Tech 67

North Carolina 75, Virginia Tech 67

South Carolina 75, Virginia Tech 67

Texas Tech 75, Virginia Tech 67

Virginia Tech 67, Virginia Tech 67

West Virginia 75, Virginia Tech 67

Wisconsin 75, Virginia Tech 67

Yale 75, Virginia Tech 67

MIDWEST

Illinois 75, Virginia Tech 67

Indiana 75, Virginia Tech 67

Marshall 75, Virginia Tech 67

North Carolina 75, Virginia Tech 67

South Carolina 75, Virginia Tech 67

Texas Tech 75, Virginia Tech 67

Virginia Tech 67, Virginia Tech 67

West Virginia 75, Virginia Tech 67

Wisconsin 75, Virginia Tech 67

Yale 75, Virginia Tech 67

FAR WEST

California 75, Virginia Tech 67

Colorado 75, Virginia Tech 67

Idaho 75, Virginia Tech 67

Montana 75, Virginia Tech 67

Utah 75, Virginia Tech 67

Washington 75, Virginia Tech 67

Wyoming 75, Virginia Tech 67

AP Women's Top 25 rated

1. Duke (20-1) beat No. 25 North Carolina State 58-40, North at Maryland, Thursday.

2. LSU (19-1) beat Auburn 57-52, Next at Mississippi, Thursday.

3. Ohio State (12-5) beat Illinois 69-59, Next vs. Indiana, Sunday.

4. Stanford (19-1) did not play. Next vs. Arizona, Thursday.

5. North Carolina (15-3) did not play. Next vs. No. 19 Georgia, Thursday.

6. Texas Tech (15-3) beat No. 8 Connecticut 69-59, Next at No. 14 Boston College, Thursday.

7. Baylor (15-3) did not play. Next vs. No. 16 Kansas State, Wednesday.

8. Rutgers (10-5) beat West Virginia 70-48, Next at North Carolina, Thursday.

9. Connecticut (13-5) lost to No. 6, Notre Dame 69-59, Next vs. No. 8 Rutgers, Thursday.

10. North Carolina (16-4) lost to No. 22 Penn State 81-68, Next vs. Iowa, Thursday.

11. Duke (15-3) beat No. 10 Georgetown 54-40, Next at Northwestern, Thursday.

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[illegible]

Competition down under bodies well for game

Talented field hints at rivalries tennis thrives on

BY PAUL ALEXANDER

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Marat Safin kept Russia's Grand Slam streak intact.

Safin won the Australian Open in the first night final on Sunday, beating home favorite Lleyton Hewitt and continuing what three of his female compatriots started by winning the last three Grand Slam events of 2004.

After losing two of the last three finals at Melbourne Park, Safin defeated Hewitt 1-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, but struggled through a subpar start. A Russian man or woman has won each of the last four Grand Slam events, with Safin joining Maria Sharapova (Wimbledon), Anastasia Myskina (French Open) and Svetlana Kuznetsova (U.S. Open).

"The first set, you really couldn't call it tennis," the fourth-seeded Safin said. "I couldn't serve. I couldn't run. I didn't believe I could play that badly."

But by the end, Safin was back at the top of his game, an effort that embodied his comeback from injuries that dropped the former world No. 1 and 2000 U.S. Open champion to 86th just over a year ago.

"It's psychological — you start to have doubts, like really I could do this or not," said Safin, a player known for his racket-busting outbursts. "It's the third time, you get so nervous, so uptight."

"I don't want to lose it," he added. "Nobody cares about the (losing) finalist — so it was just a kind of a relief."

Safin made a single, jubilant fist pump after Hewitt hit a forehand out on match point, and said the victory wouldn't really sink in until he was back in his hotel room with the trophy.

Now Safin can look to the fu-



Russia's Marat Safin holds his Australian Open trophy in St Kilda, Australia, Monday. Safin defeated Australia's Lleyton Hewitt in the final.

ture, knowing he has proven that his critics — those who questioned whether he would win another major — didn't know what they were talking about.

Just as important, he proved to himself, and the rest of the world, that top-ranked Roger Federer is beatable after ending his 26-match winning streak in the semifinals.

"Once you beat him, and then you beat Lleyton, you get so much confidence in yourself that you really can play great, you can win big titles and you can beat huge players in the finals and semifinals," Safin said.

It's the same feeling Serena Williams has after winning the women's title Saturday, silencing the people who said she and sister Venus were slipping.

In winning her seventh Grand Slam title, but first in 18 months, Williams put her distinctive stamp back on the women's game, defeating the fourth-, second- and top-seeded players in her last three matches.

Williams' three-set victory over Sharapova in the semifinals also avenged her loss in the Wimbledon final last year and set the stage for a new rivalry in women's tennis.



Serena Williams, left, and compatriot Lindsay Davenport hug after their women's final match at the Australian Open on Saturday.

men's tennis. Williams will rise to No. 2 in the new rankings and already has her sights set on the French Open — and the top spot.

Sharapova's title was bracketed by Myskina's French Open title and Kuznetsova's U.S. Open championship. With five winners in the last five Grand Slams, the variety at the top of the women's game bodes well for the future, especially after 2004 Australian Open winner Justine Henin-Hardenne and runner-up Kim Clijsters come back from injuries.

Hewitt, who put in months of preparation in his effort to become the first Australian man to win the Open since Mark Edmondson on the grass courts of Kooyung in 1976, was downcast after losing to Safin.

"I'm human and I'm disappointed — to come that close, train so hard to put yourself in a position — it's hard to take at the moment," said Hewitt, who will replace Andre Roddick at No. 2 in the rankings.

Hewitt had reasons to feel good. Shortly after his loss, he proposed to his girlfriend, actress Rebecca Cartwright. A statement

released by the couple said he gave Cartwright an engagement ring within hours after the match.

Other Australians had pretty good tournaments, too.

Scott Draper and Samantha Stosur, a wild-card pair playing together for the first time, won the mixed doubles earlier Sunday, defeating Kevin Ullyett of Zimbabwe and Liezel Huber of South Africa 6-2, 2-6, 7-6 (6). Stosur was scheduled to play with another player, who withdrew on the day before the tournament.

Draper, also a professional golfer, had to juggle sports over the past four days, playing in his first pro golf event Friday morning and winning his mixed doubles semifinal on Friday afternoon. He missed the cut in the Victoria Open. The last round finished Sunday — as the mixed doubles final was being played.

Australia's Alicia Molik, who lost to Lindsay Davenport in the singles semifinals with a questionable call playing a key role, teamed with Kuznetsova to win the women's doubles by beating Davenport and Corina Morariu, back on the circuit after being diagnosed with leukemia 3½ years ago.

Pistons' Brown denies reports of interest in coaching Knicks

The Associated Press

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. — Larry Brown wants to remain with the Detroit Pistons through the end of his coaching career, the Detroit Free Press reported Monday.

Speculation that Brown was thinking about leaving the Pistons at the end of the season and taking over the New York Knicks began Friday, when he was quoted in a New York newspaper as saying that the Knicks' job was one he had "dreamed about many times."

But Brown said there was more to it than that.

"I told him what I'm telling you," Brown told the Free Press.

"Did I say it was my dream job? Yes, I told him it once was. But



Briefs

they passed me over twice. I grew up in New York. I talked to the guy about that. I talked to him about Red Holzman... I've never been smart enough to say 'no comment.'"

The Hall of Fame coach, who has three-plus years left on his \$25 million, five-year contract, declined comment at Sunday's practice, but told the Free Press that coaching the Knicks is not in his future.

"Even if they offer me the job at the end of this season, I am not going to go coach the Knicks," Brown said.

The Pistons are 26-18 and second in the Central Division, a half-game behind Cleveland.

"I told the guy I'm going to coach in Detroit and this is going to be my last coaching job," Brown said. "My statement to him was I'm not coaching anywhere else, this is my last coaching job. My goal is to finish here and hang with my family."

McMillan away indefinitely

SEATTLE — Seattle SuperSonics coach Nate McMillan will be away from the team indefinitely after the death of his mother, team officials said.

Associate head coach Dwane Casey will coach the team in McMillan's absence.

McMillan missed practice Sunday to fly to his mother's home in

Raleigh, N.C. Jeanette Tyson, 62, died Sunday.

It is the second time this month McMillan has left the team to deal with family issues. On Jan. 13, McMillan missed a game against the Los Angeles Clippers to attend the funeral of an aunt.

Seattle hosts San Antonio on Monday night and is at Sacramento on Tuesday.

Kafoer out with ankle sprain

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Charlotte Bobcats rookie Emeka Okafor will miss Tuesday's game at Utah after spraining his ankle Sunday against the Los Angeles Lakers.

Okafor injured his left ankle while battling for a pass with 2:34 remaining in the Bobcats' 101-90 loss to the Lakers.

The second overall pick in the NBA draft has played all 41 games of his rookie season, averaging 14.9 points and 11.1 rebounds.

Arroyo has surgery on nose

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. — Detroit Pistons guard Carlos Arroyo had surgery on his broken nose Monday and is doubtful for the next two games.

Arroyo broke his nose during a victory over New York on Saturday night, when he was accidentally hit in the face by the Knicks' Trevor Ariza.

After likely missing games Tuesday at Washington and Wednesday against Atlanta, he will be re-evaluated for Saturday's game at New Jersey. The reserve will have to wear a protective mask when he returns.

Cowboys' guard tandem puts on a show in debut

The Associated Press

BOULDER, Colo. — John Lucas and Jameison Curry had a successful debut as Oklahoma State's starting backcourt.

Lucas, the veteran who led the Cowboys to the Final Four last season, and star freshman Curry started together for the first time this season and paced Oklahoma State to a 104-86 victory, its first at Colorado in almost nine years.

It was the ninth-ranked Cowboys' highest output since getting 108 against Oklahoma in 1989.

"When your starting guards have 48 points, 12 assists and only one turnover, you're not going to lose very many games," Oklahoma State coach Eddie Sutton said.

Lucas had 26 points and Curry, starting in place of Daniel Bobik, had 17 of his season-high 22 in the second half.

"I had six steals and no turnovers, that's all that matters," Curry said.

The last time Oklahoma State (15-3, 5-2 Big 12) won in Boulder was Feb. 24, 1996.

Curry was 6-for-8 from three-point range and provided some strong defense in the second half on Colorado freshman Richard Roby. Roby had 12 points on 4-for-4 shooting on three in the first half. He finished with 14 points.

"They eliminated my touches in the second half," Roby said. "I thought they had two or three different guys guarding me in the first half. They went to one guy in the second half."

Andy Osborn and Chris Copeland each scored 19 points to lead the Buffaloes (10-8, 2-5), who were outrebounded 36-23. The Cowboys were 13-for-21 on three-pointers, while Colorado was a school-record 17-for-29.

"It turned into a gunning game and we got outgunned," Roby said. "They shot 60 percent and you won't beat anybody allowing 60 percent shooting."

No. 14 Alabama 75, Georgia 47: At Tuscaloosa, Ala., Kennedy Winston scored 18 points and Alabama capitalized on its suffocating defense to beat Georgia.

The game was originally scheduled for Saturday night, but the Bulldogs were delayed getting to Tuscaloosa because of icy weather in Georgia.

Alabama (17-3, 6-1 Southeastern Conference) held Georgia to 31 percent shooting from the field, the eighth in this season. The Crimson Tide have held an opponent under 40 percent.

Younes Idrissi had 14 points for Georgia (7-10, 1-6).

Winston scored Alabama's first eight points as the Crimson Tide went up 10-2 on the way to a 36-17 halftime lead. Alabama stretched its lead to 62-23 with 7:53 left despite playing reserves for most of the second half.

Georgia went more than eight minutes in the second half without scoring and Alabama outscored the Bulldogs 21-2 in the first 10 minutes after halftime.

Alabama won easily despite committing a season-high 26 turnovers, while the Bulldogs turned the ball over 24 times.

Six Georgia players fouled out of the game, including all five starters. Alabama took 42 free throws to 16 for Georgia.

Jermario Davidson had 10 rebounds in 23 minutes, his third straight game with at least 10 rebounds.

Chuck Davis and Earnest Shelton each scored 11 points for Alabama.

Alabama had a season-high 15 steals, four by Shelton.

Maryland 79, No. 22 Georgia Tech 71: At College Park, Md., Nik Caner-Medley scored 19 points and Chris McCray had 16, leading a balanced attack that carried rejuvenated Maryland past Georgia Tech.

The Terrapins let a 10-point halftime lead dwindle to three before pulling away for their second victory over a ranked opponent in a five-day span. Maryland lost three of five before upsetting then-No. 2 Duke 75-66 on the road last Wednesday.

John Gilchrist scored 15 points, Esene Ibekwe had 14 and Travis Garrison grabbed a career-high 15 rebounds for the Terrapins (13-5, 4-3 Atlantic Coast Conference), who have won 10 of their last 11 home games against Georgia Tech (12-6, 3-4).

Isma'il Muhammad led the Yellow Jackets with 15 points and Luke Skiles had 12. Georgia Tech, which was seeking to build on a 102-101 overtime victory over then-No. 5 Wake Forest on Thursday, instead lost for the fourth time in five games and fell to 0-3 on the road in the ACC.

Georgia Tech went 5-46 without scoring after cutting the deficit to three with nine minutes to play.



Maryland's John Gilchrist, right, blocks a shot attempt by Georgia Tech's Nik Caner-Medley during the second half of Sunday's game at College Park, Md. Maryland beat Georgia Tech 79-71.

Illini sweep the ballots in AP poll

The Associated Press

Illinois was No. 1 in The Associated Press college basketball poll for the ninth straight week Monday, and for the first time the Illini were a unanimous choice.

An impressive victory at Wisconsin and a home defeat of Minnesota kept the Illini (21-0) unbeaten. Unlike last week, when they received all but one first-place vote from the national media panel, the Illini were No. 1 on all 72 ballots.

Illinois is the first unanimous No. 1 since Duke did it for nine polls in a 10-week span in 2001-02. The Illini's nine-week run at No. 1 is the longest since Connecticut was there for 10 weeks in 1996-99.

Boston College (18-0), the other unbeaten team in Division I, jumped from eighth to No. 5, the highest ranking in school history.

Maryland and Villanova moved into the rankings. Maryland had been out of the Top 25 for three weeks and Villanova is in for the first time since 1997.

North Carolina moved up one spot to second, while Kansas, which bounced back from its first loss of the season with victories over Baylor and Texas, jumped from sixth to No. 3.

Duke, which received the one No. 1 vote that Illinois didn't get last week, fell from the ranks of the unbeaten with a loss to Maryland and dropped from second to fourth.

Following Boston College was Kentucky. Wake Forest, Syracuse, Louisville and Oklahoma State.

Alabama jumped from 14th to No. 11 and was followed by Michigan State, Washington, and Oklahoma and Arizona, which tied for 14th. Pittsburgh, Gonzaga, Cincinnati, Wisconsin and Texas rounded out the top 20.

The last five ranked teams were Utah, Maryland, Connecticut, Villanova and Georgia Tech.

Redick's misses big news as Duke routs Hokies

BY KEITH PARSONS

The Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Jeff King stood outside Virginia Tech's locker room and tried to make sense of the pounding he and his team-mate received at Duke.

The Hokies forward, who's also a tight end on the football team, had various bumps and bruises, and a cut over his right eye. He joked about being hit harder in this game than he had been all season while the Hokies won the Atlantic Coast Conference football title.

"But we expected it," King said. "We came down here knowing it was going to be a dogfight. We'll see them in a couple of weeks at home."

Shelden Williams had 21 points and 11 rebounds by halftime and

J.J. Redick scored 29 points despite a shaky performance at the free-throw line, helping the second-ranked Blue Devils bury Virginia Tech 100-65 on Sunday night.

Williams finished with 25 points and 17 rebounds for Duke (16-1, 6-1 ACC), which bounced back from a home loss earlier in the week to Maryland. Daniel Ewing added 17 points.

"We wanted to come out and make a statement," Seth Greenburg said. "We knew they were going to be a scrappy team, so we wanted to be the first punch, so to speak."

Virginia Tech (11-7, 4-3) fell to 0-8 at Cameron and played the final 4:39 without coach Seth Greenburg, who was issued his second technical foul and headed to the locker room.

"I feel bad for my daughters and my wife, because obviously I embarrassed them and that's not something I want to happen," Greenburg said. "I did not use profanity — until I was tossed."

Zabian Dowdell had 15 points to lead the Hokies, who finished with 34 fouls, seven off the ACC record set in 1998 by Clemson against North Carolina. The Blue Devils shot 49 free throws — 35 in the first half — to Tech's 23.

"I guess we foul a lot," Greenburg said. "Our guys tried to play as hard as humanly possible, and we're just going to continue to work hard and try to establish a foundation for our program."

Perhaps tuning up for his matchup with Wake Forest's Eric Williams on Wednesday, the Duke center swished a turnaround jumper about 20 seconds

into the game and had five opportunities for three-point plays in the opening 20 minutes. He finished 9-for-13 from the field.

"He's a monster under the basket," Virginia Tech forward Deron Washington said. "He's too strong."

With so many stoppages for free throws, even the Cameron Crazies appeared to get bored with the pace of play, chanting "Please stop fouling!" on several occasions. At one point, the Blue Devils shot free throws on four straight possessions.

"I think it was too physical," Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "It shouldn't be that physical, but for both teams I'm not blaming them. It was both sides."

Redick might have been affected, too. For the first time in his career, he missed more than one

free throw in a game, missing only seven of 10. He had missed only 20 of his previous 354. He's made 96 of 103 (93 percent) this season.

"I had no idea what was going on," Redick said. "I missed every one the same way. It was like I was dreaming."

The Blue Devils held Virginia Tech to 11 points in the second half, the final 5:35 of the first half and completed a 17-2 run on Redick's three-pointer just before the buzzer. "It was a real game," said Krzyzewski during a 16-minute timeout before Ewing and Redick combined to make four consecutive three-pointers, and the final 10 minutes was nothing more than garbage time.

"We're going to have to play this hard just to have an opportunity to win any game we play," Krzyzewski said. "We've always known that. We're a good team just trying to get better."

Leonard overtakes faltering Ogilvie

First victory in almost two years bodes well for upcoming season

BY KEN PETERS
The Associated Press

LA QUINTA, Calif. — Justin Leonard felt he was in a rut, stuck on No. 8. After almost two years, he finally won No. 9.

"I enjoy taking pressure off myself, because I'm usually a little more relaxed and have a little more fun," Leonard said Sunday after ending his long victory slump with a victory in the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic.

"I've been sitting on eight wins for almost two years, and it's nice to get a ninth."

He came from three shots back to pass faltering front-runner Joe Ogilvie on the third hole on the way to a 5-under 67 and three-shot victory over Ogilvie and Tim Clark.

Leonard, the 1997 British Open winner, certainly would like to follow in the footsteps of the previous two Hope champions.

Last year's winner, Phil Mickelson, used the Hope as an early springboard to win the Masters, his first major title. Mike Weir, the 2003 Hope winner, went on to don the green jacket at Augusta that year.

"I would say it's just coincidental that we look at the two guys who won this tournament the previous two years," Leonard said.

"Two pretty good players that probably set up pretty well for Augusta."

"I love playing Augusta. I'm looking very much forward to it."

He grinned and added, "I certainly hope to keep that streak alive. I may write that in my yardage book to give me a little boost of confidence."

Leonard finished the 90-hole Hope at 28-under 332 to end a winless string that stretched to the 2003 Honda Classic.

Ogilvie, in his sixth year on the tour and still looking for his first title, had a closing 73. Clark, who won the South African Open in his native country a year earlier, shot a 69.

Coming off his worst year since joining the tour full-time in 1995, Leonard rolled in six birdie putts and had just one bogey in the final round at PGA West's Palmer Course.

Ogilvie opened the day with a two-shot lead over Peter Leonard of Australia, with Leonard another shot back in third.

Ogilvie was in a five-way tie for the lead after the first hole, then he alone at the top the next three days.

Leonard moved in front quickly during the final round, with birdies on the first two holes and a par on the third while Ogilvie bogeyed two of the first three holes. Leonard built the lead to four shots over Ogilvie and Clark with a birdie on No. 10, had another birdie at No. 11 and then parred out.

"The rain dance didn't work," Ogilvie said jokingly. "I was try-



Justin Leonard, right, celebrates with his caddy, Brent Everson, after winning the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic on Sunday, the ninth career win.

ing for a rainout today, but that didn't happen.

"I certainly didn't play the way I would have liked today, but I got a pretty good front-row seat for a great round of golf [by Leonard]."

Clark's performance was impressive considering he had an arduous trip to California, and had never so much as seen any of the four courses used for the Hope.

After winning in South Africa the previous Sunday, he hopped on a plane and spent some 50 hours traveling—and waiting between connections—on his way to the five-day Hope.

"Coming here so far, such a travel, I didn't expect much of a week," said Clark, who earned \$413,600 [to Leonard's \$846,000] for his trouble.

The week was a blur to him.

"I can't even remember my [final] round, to be honest," Clark said. "I couldn't even tell you what I did on 3. I don't even remember what 3 looks like."

Leonard dropped to 42nd on the earnings list last year with \$1.5 million, and failed to win a title for only the second time since 1996. He didn't qualify for the Tour Championship for the first time since turning pro.

Irwin wins record fifth straight Turtle Bay

BY JAYMES SOG
The Associated Press

KAHUKU, Hawaii — The Turtle Bay Championship has become the Hale Irwin Invitational.

Irwin became the first player to win a men's professional tour event five straight times Sunday, easily holding off Dana Quigley by five strokes.

"It's always good to be a part of history and I think this is a very proud moment," said the 59-year-old Irwin, who closed with a 5-under 67 for a record 16-under 200 total.

With his fourth straight win at Turtle Bay and the overall title in the event, Irwin pushed his Champions Tour-record victory total to 41.

The three-time U.S. Open champion had shared the mark of four straight victories in an event with Tiger Woods (Bay Hill Invitational, 2000-03), Gene Sarazen (Miami Open, 1926, 1928-30), Walter Hagen (PGA Championship, 1924-27) and Tom Morris Jr. (British Open, 1868-70, 1872).

The trade wind kicking in, Irwin masterfully controlled the Turtle Bay Resort's balmy, oceanic Palmer Course, breaking his own tournament mark of 11-under 205 set in 1997.

He dressed in a red shirt, blue slacks and a white cap in support of U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Irwin said his final round game plan was to



Hale Irwin holds the trophy after winning the Turtle Bay Championship the fifth straight time.

get off to a fast start and hit all the fairways and greens.

Mission accomplished. He hit all his greens in regulation and overshot just one fairway on No. 17.

"Hale was just on another planet," Quigley said. "He was in a different world. No one could've beaten him today."

The Hall of Famer, coming off a third-place tie last week in the season-opening MasterCard Championship on the Big Island, has won eight official events in the islands dating to the PGA Tour's 1981 Hawaiian Open, earning nearly \$3.9 million.

"I can't tell you how lucky I am with a third last week and a first this week because I didn't do anything for six weeks," he said.

His time away from golf never showed.

Irwin took away any suspense early, carding five birdies on the front nine to make the turn at 31 and take a commanding six-stroke lead, leaving the rest of the field fighting for second place.

"Two of the three days, I got off to a very quick start." "It sets the tempo for the rest of the day and you feel like you don't have to peddle quite so hard to keep up with the pack because you're ahead of the pack."

"Then it's a matter of trying to keep your focus and not get yourself into situations where you blindside yourself."

Quigley, the MasterCard winner, shot a 69 and took home \$132,000 to push his two-week winnings to \$404,000.

"Finishing 1-2 in the first two weeks is beyond what I expected," he said.

Irwin, who began his streak with a victory at Kaanapali in 2000, played nearly flawless in the 54-hole event. He began the day with a two-stroke lead over Allen Doyle and shared the lead with three others after the opening round.

Irwin continued his torrid run on the back side by holing a long birdie putt on the 416-yard 10th to reach 17 under. The putt curled left to right and caused the edge of the cup for a split second and dropped in.

The gallery cheered wildly as Irwin exhaled deeply and raised his right arm.

Gatti set to challenge undefeated Mayweather

BY JOHN CURRAN
The Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Arturo Gatti was feeling doubly blessed after vanquishing "Jesse" James Leija.

"I won the fight and didn't have to go to the hospital. That's a big plus for me," said Gatti, who put another notch in his WBC 140-pound belt with a convincing fifth-round knockout over Leija on Saturday.

Next up is unbeaten challenger Floyd Mayweather Jr., who will almost certainly put up a better fight.

Quick and crafty, Mayweather will square off with the brawling Gatti in a June 11 pay-per-view show in Boardwalk Hall, the site of Gatti's triumph over Leija.

Gatti, who made \$2 million for the second defense of his WBC title to Leija's \$700,000 on Saturday, was unfazed when Mayweather didn't show for a post-fight news conference announcing their fight.

"He's not the one that's going to set tickets any other," said Gatti, 32, of Jersey City. "That's the truth."

Indeed, it's Gatti — box-office gold in Atlantic City in recent years — who consistently puts people in the seats at Boardwalk Hall.

His past five fights there have all drawn 11,000 or more, including a sellout crowd of 12,599 on Saturday night.

Mayweather (33-0), a former WBC super featherweight and lightweight champion, has moved up to the 140-pound weight class and is looking for his first title in it.

In his last outing, he stopped Henry Bruseles in the eighth round on Jan. 23 in Miami.

Leija, who at 38 is nine years older than Mayweather and six older than Gatti, couldn't handle Gatti despite a fight plan centered on drawing Gatti into the kind of toe-to-toe fight he often wages.

Gatti kept his distance in the early rounds, wary of any surprises by Leija, who said before the fight he hoped to use Gatti's aggressiveness against him.

"He's crafty and I expected the way to beat him was to use the jab," Gatti said. "I stayed on the outside because of his experience. I wanted to stay on the outside. Once I started landing the right hand, that made the difference."

In the fifth, he knocked Leija down with a hard right to the head that was the beginning of the end. Dazed, Leija (47-7-2) took a 9-count, barely getting to his feet before referee Earl Brown could count him out.

Gatti finished him with a left hand to the ear. Leija got to his knees but Brown counted him out at 1:48 of the fifth, depriving the crowd of one of the gory, down-to-the-wire brawls they usually get from Gatti.

Kildow's back bruised after training crash

Two women injured; Miller uniform DQ'd

By ERICA BULMAN

The Associated Press

SANTA CATERINA VALFURVA, Italy — American ski star Lindsey Kildow escaped serious injury Monday when she crashed into several photographers during downhill training in the Alpine World Ski Championships.

Kildow bruised her back and wrist but planned to take part in training runs Tuesday and Wednesday in advance of Sunday's downhill.

"I'm lucky," Kildow said. "I'm not badly injured. I just banged myself up a little bit. I've got a nice bruise on my back. I broke my pole and it hurts on my hand right where the grip goes. But I'll be going at 'em tomorrow."

Two other skiers were injured during the first women's training session. Germany's Isabelle Huber tore a ligament in her right knee, ending her season, and Russia's Alena Kasakova injured her left knee and was taken to a hospital for tests.

This has been a rough week for Kildow, who was a favorite for Sunday's super giant slalom but finished ninth after making several mistakes.

On Monday, she crashed after coming off a roll going into the steeps, rotating in the air and landing backward. She fell spread eagle on her back, then spun on the ground several times as she sped down the course and plowed into the photographers.

"It was kind of scary," Kildow said. "I guess I ran into some people but I don't remember that."

Austria's Michaela Dorfmeister was fastest in training in 1 minute, 42.41 seconds, followed by Germany's Hilde Gerg (1:43.31) and Italy's Isolda Kostner (1:43.42). The top American was Caroline Lalive, sixth in 1:43.95.

The three injured women were hurt on one of the most challenging sections of the course named for former Italian Olympic star Deborrah Compagnoni. Skiers left before jumping and changing direction in the air to make the next corner after landing.



American Lindsey Kildow loses her balance prior to crashing in Monday's downhill training session in the Alpine World Ski Championships at Santa Caterina Valfurva, Italy. Kildow, among the favorites for Saturday's race, was battered and had a back bruise but was otherwise unharmed.

Meanwhile, across the valley at Bormio, World Cup overall leader Bode Miller began his bid for a second gold medal by placing third in the opening men's downhill training session.

Miller's time was later disqualified because of an equipment violation. Miller, who came to the World Cup as a slalom and giant slalom specialist before branching out into the speed events last season, often wears a giant slalom suit during downhill training because the added protection built into the arms protects him when he hits a downhill gate. The disqualification carries no penalty other than to remove Miller's time from the scoresheet.

Olympic downhill champion Fritz Strobl was fastest on Monday, but that was only the

first step in the cutthroat competition among the powerful Austrians for a spot in the championships' premier race on Saturday.

Teams in world championship and Olympic competition are limited to four starters, which usually means Austria must leave off racers who rank among the world's best.

In this case, a victim could be four-time World Cup overall and multiple Olympic champion Hermann Maier. He, Strobl, Werner Franz and Christoph Gruber are contending for three spots, with times in training sessions Tuesday to be a determining factor.

Johann Grugger, who has won two World Cup downhill this season, has already clinched one of Austria's spots, and Michael Walchhofer has an automatic fifth berth as defending champion.

Misplaced gold medal is returned to Miller

The Associated Press

BORMIO, Italy — Only hours after winning the super-G gold medal, American Bode Miller lost it.

The 27-year-old American skier discovered the medal was missing after celebrating his Alpine World Ski Championships victory at the U.S. House, quarters the American team is using for recreation and publicity events.

"The medal was in Bode's jacket and his jacket disappeared," U.S. men's head speed coach John McBride said. "Someone eventually returned the medal to the bartender. A team member then retrieved it. But the jacket is gone."

It isn't the first time Miller has lost a medal.

He also lost his gold medal from the combined event in the 2003 worlds in St. Moritz, Switzerland. He'd been using the medal to anchor a faulty toilet seat for in his apartment in Patsch, Austria.

"It was holding up our toilet seat for a little while because it's one of those seats that keeps falling down," Miller recalled.

"So we taped it to the top and flopped it over like a weight so it was holding the toilet seat. I just don't know why it went after that."

"It doesn't surprise me," McBride said. "He doesn't care about material stuff too much. He doesn't go home and hold his trophies and cherish them."

"Rather, he cherishes the feeling of the day he won them."

Bonds to miss most of spring training to rehab knee

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Barry Bonds is expected to miss much of spring training following minor arthroscopic surgery Monday on his right knee.

The seven-time NL MVP had a "minor arthritis cleanup," the San Francisco Giants said in a statement. Dr. Arthur Tjia also repaired a small tear in Bonds' meniscus.

Bonds, who had a similar surgery on his left knee in October, will begin six weeks of rehabilitation Tuesday, and the Giants expect him to return to full strength by Opening Day.

Trainer Stan Conte didn't immediately return a phone call seeking comment.

Bonds, 40, has 703 career homers, behind only Hank Aaron (755) and Babe Ruth (714).

Sports briefs

Neagle grievance vs. Rockies scheduled for April

NEW YORK — Denny Neagle's grievance against the Colorado Rockies to overturn the team's termination of his contract will be heard on April 14-15 by baseball arbitrator Shyam Das.

Colorado terminated the pitcher's contract on Dec. 6, three days after he was issued a citation for solicitation. Neagle pleaded innocent last week to the charge, which stems from an allegation that he offered a woman \$40 for sex.

Neagle, who has not pitched in a game since July 2003 because

of injuries, agreed in December 2000 to a \$51 million, five-year contract that called for him to be paid \$10 million this year. In addition, the deal contains a \$12.5 million team option for 2006 with a \$9 million buyout, meaning he would be owed \$19 million by the Rockies if Das rules in his favor.

In terminating Neagle's deal, Colorado cited the provision in the uniform player contract that states the team can end the agreement if the player shall "fail, refuse or neglect to conform his personal conduct to the standards of good citizenship and good sportsmanship."

The Major League Baseball Players Association filed a grievance against the termination on Dec. 14.

Neagle, 36, has a 124-92 career

record with a 4.24 ERA over 11 seasons, going 19-23 with a 5.57 ERA for the Rockies. The left-hander has had elbow ligament and shoulder operations since he last pitched.

Coley Wallace, boxer and actor, dead at 77

NEW YORK — Coley Wallace, who knocked out Rocky Marciano in an amateur bout and portrayed Joe Louis in two movies, has died. He was 77.

Wallace died in a Manhattan hospital Sunday of heart failure, his lawyer and friend, Raymond Sussman, said Sunday.

Wallace had a record of 20-7 in six years as a professional, but his most memorable moment came as an amateur in 1948, when he defeated Marciano in the New

York Golden Gloves tournament. It is believed that the defeat was the only loss ever for Marciano, who went on to win the heavyweight championship and was unbeaten in 49 fights.

Wallace is best known for film portraying Joe Louis on twice, once in "The Joe Louis Story" in 1953 and again in Martin Scorsese's "Raging Bull" in 1980.

Athens, Berlin, Moscow appeal for swim worlds

LAUSANNE, Switzerland — Swimming's international governing body expects to know by Feb. 15 if one of the world championships will be held in Athens, Berlin or Moscow.

FINA confirmed Monday that the three cities have officially applied to stage the July 17-31 meet, which was moved from Montreal because of budget problems.



Philadelphia Eagles receiver Terrell Owens makes a running catch during the team's first workout in Jacksonville, Fla., Monday.

Owens practices for possible return

BY ROB MAADDI

The Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Terrell Owens practiced Monday for the first time since injuring his ankle last month, moving closer toward possibly returning for the Super Bowl.

The Philadelphia Eagles' All-Pro receiver took part in less than one-third of the team's 30 plays, getting a pass each time he ran a route. Just last week, Dr. Mark Myerson, the surgeon who operated on Owens' right ankle in December, said he would not clear him to suit up against the New England Patriots on Sunday.

"We limbed what he did and he did it well and he did it with the team," Eagles coach Andy Reid. "He moved around pretty well. We'll see how he continues, see how he feels tomorrow and the rest of the week."

In his first season with the Eagles after eight years in San Francisco, Owens led Philadelphia with 77 catches for 1,200 yards and 14 TDs.

Myerson inserted two screws in Owens' ankle and a plate on the outside of the ankle three days after he was injured against Dallas on Dec. 19. Owens was told

after surgery that he had only an outside chance of returning for the Super Bowl, which was 6½ weeks away at the time. But he rehabbed vigorously, hoping to help Philadelphia win its first NFL championship since 1960.

The final decision on Owens' status will come down to the player, Reid and the team's medical staff.

"Could the same injury occur? Yes," Reid said. "But he won't damage it any further than he already has."

Owens wasn't available for comment. He's supposed to take part in Tuesday's interview sessions.

"He looked pretty smooth out there," tight end L.J. Smith said. "He's not trying to push it. He's getting his timing down and he caught a couple balls."

The injury to Owens was a devastating blow for a team that dominated the NFC and clinched the No. 1 seed in the conference after just 14 games. Owens invigorated the Eagles with his attitude, enthusiasm and stellar performance, adding a swagger to a team that desperately needed a personality.

With him, the offense was extremely potent, averaging 25.4 points in 14 games.

Jacksonville seems ready 'to get the party started'

By RON WORD

The Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — After more than four years of planning, Jacksonville is ready for its time on the Super Bowl stage.

Owners of temporary stores are loading shelves for a one-week sales season, security is getting tighter, and the football world's eyes are beginning to focus on the River City — which, despite its relative lack of status compared to some of the nation's popular tourist destinations, welcomes the challenge of hosting the NFL's title game.

The finishing touches for the transformation of Jacksonville's downtown are going on in earnest, with workers planting flowers, paving streets and setting up temporary cell phone towers — all with the hope of better accommodating the estimated 100,000 visitors who'll flood the city this week for the Super Bowl.

Palm trees have been planted and concrete sidewalks have been replaced by brick. Television lights and towers have been erected atop a parking garage. TV networks are beginning to set up their expansive camps and colorful fiberglass mannequins spaced throughout the downtown area.

And on Sunday afternoon, the real stars — the AFC champion New England Patriots and NFC champion Philadelphia Eagles — arrived to begin their final preparations for the Feb. 6 game.

Let the party begin. "I'm glad it's finally here, but it's a big mystery dealing with all the unknowns," said Vince O'Rourke, who owns Eclipse, a downtown restaurant and lounge.

Jacksonville has never before hosted a Super Bowl, and for many the process has been of the learn-as-you-go variety. O'Rourke said the game is causing him big logistical problems as far as supplies and staffing — he simply doesn't know how much to order and how many people to hire.

Betty Turner operates a jewelry store, and she, too, has concerns — like how diverted traffic will affect her sales. A street festival will go on outside her downtown storefront, and she's not sure how she'll get to work or where she — or her prospective customers — will park.

"I am praying very hard that the Super Bowl will give us the bump to keep going," Turner said.

Organizers insist that everyone involved can relax, and that everything leading up to next Sunday will go as planned.

It may be the first Super Bowl for the city and most of its 10,000 volunteers, but it's not the first for many of the key organizers — including Michael Kelly, who heads the Super Bowl Host Committee after serving in a similar capacity for Tampa's Super Bowl in 2001.

Kelly knows the city wasn't a popular choice to host this game, yet he believes Jacksonville, which submitted its bid application back in 2000, will prove critics wrong.

"There is a lot of anticipation," Kelly said. "We are ready to get the party started."

Added host committee spokeswoman Heather Surface: "A

well-oiled machine is an excellent way to describe it."

Plans seem to be moving along smoothly as the city prepares for the hordes of Eagles and Patriots fans, the arrival of five cruise ships that will serve as temporary floating hotels, plus corporate bigwigs and a virtual army of public relations folks pushing everything from the Sharpe ink pens to rapper Snoop Dogg.

Organizers say the game will result in a direct economic impact of \$300 million or more for Jacksonville, the nation's largest city in terms of mass (841 square miles) but one that doesn't even rank among the nation's top 50 television markets.

And there are plenty of people hoping to cash in. Among them: Former NFL tailback Ben Malone, who played for the Miami Dolphins from 1973-78. He'll operate a temporary storefront called "Major T's," which will be stocked with Super Bowl shirts, jackets (\$300), sport glasses (\$8) and other memorabilia.

Every year the Malone family, from Tempe, Ariz., heads for the Super Bowl to operate a similar shop.

"We heard this was where there was going to be a big black party," said Malone's son, Ben.

Down the block, Mike Ranne, a building manager, was overseeing the completion of a coffee shop, which will be run by the Jacksonville chapter of National Association for the Mentally Retarded, of which he's the local president.

"The Super Bowl has been good for downtown," he said. "People are doing what they've been off doing for years, even if they are doing it in one week."

Words: Harrison, others dive into fray

WORDS, FROM BACK PAGE

Hey, Rodney, there's still six days before you have to suit up.

For the veteran Patriots to dive headfirst into such a fray is almost astonishing. Many of the Eagles recognize that. Even though this is the team's first trip to the Super Bowl in 24 years, they came across Sunday as the more experienced, resolute bunch.

"They were meaningless comments," Donovan McNabb said. "Freddie didn't mean anything by them. It's sad that people have to blow them up to make them into a story."

"Freddie apologized. If someone needs those comments to get up for a game like this, they don't need to be here. This is the Super Bowl, this is the ultimate."

The ultimate what? It was hard to tell Sunday.

Maybe Mitchell, who was unavailable to the media on Sunday, will take this oral spat a step further when he does speak.

Asked if he would directly address Mitchell, Harrison responded



Super Bowl XXXIX,
midnight Sunday.
AFN-A; AFN-P

Game time is Central European.

ed sarcastically: "What would I say? I don't have much to say. It's Freddie Mitchell."

Mitchell could be a key figure during the game itself, when everyone hopefully will be paying attention to the actual play, not the wordy by-play. Even with his banged-up secondary, New England has two stout opponents, and if T.O. is MIA, Mitchell must produce to give Philadelphia a decent chance for its first NFL crown since 1960.

The Eagles acquired Owens to get them over the hump of three straight NFC title games losses. While they scaled that mountain, they did so without the injured Owens, whose main role was as a cheerleader.

While team doctors have not cleared Owens to be on the field next Sunday, he's making every effort to play. Reid and his staff have been close-mouthed — isn't that refreshing? — about Owens' potential availability.

New England has its own health issues, with both starting cornerbacks out as they have been for months, and All-Pro DT Richard Seymour's status uncertain with a knee injury.

But the Patriots have treated their absences as a non-issue — at least until Mitchell insulted them.

"We have a pieced-together secondary," said Troy Brown, the receiver-kick returner and corner-back, "It's patchwork, but so what? It's a team sport. It doesn't matter if you know our name or not."

SPORTS



Gooden eases Cavs' pain
with career-high 33
to lead win, Page 26

Starting a week of words

Pats' Harrison responds to Mitchell

BY BARRY WILNER
The Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Roll out the steel cage. Or maybe just invite Rodney Harrison and Freddie Mitchell to the "Jerry Springer Show."

The WWE-style rank-out feud between the New England safety and Philadelphia receiver has gotten pretty juicy. It's even overshadowing the Terrell Owens will-he-or-won't-he saga.

Anyone who thought the Patriots are too well-versed in this Super Bowl stuff and far too classy to get involved in a war of words with the Eagles a full week before the big game might need to think again.

The Patriots are angry about comments last week from Mitchell.

The defending champions made it clear Sunday when they arrived in Jacksonville that they aren't about to ignore Mitchell disingering their secondary, particularly Harrison.

"When he says something like that," linebacker-lineman Willie McGinest said of Mitchell, "he's disrespecting our whole defense. Not only Rodney, but me and Tedy Bruschi and Mike Vrabel and all the rest of us."

That Mitchell has been an underachieving backup for Terrell Owens hasn't escaped New England's notice. Owens, side-

lined since Game 14 with torn ankle ligaments, probably deserves the spotlight as he attempts to get healthy enough to play Sunday. He still hasn't practiced, but has been running and no longer has a limp.

Considering how the Patriots might be gunning for Mitchell in the game, maybe the Eagles need Owens more than ever.

But even if the All-Pro receiver returns — coach Andy Reid said he will be evaluated daily — he isn't likely to be a focal point of Philadelphia's offense. And he probably won't get nearly the attention from the Patriots during their media sessions as Mitchell will receive.

Or already has received.

"Maybe he was drinking before he started talking," Harrison said, "because that was clearly a mistake. No one in this league would attack somebody a week before the Super Bowl."

"I'm not really surprised because you're always going to find one jerk out of the bunch, just like [Mike] Vanderjagt," added Harrison, who also verbally feuded with the Indianapolis kicker during the playoffs. "You're always going to find one guy like that who wants some attention and wants to do something to try and stir up the emotions of the game."

"I don't need any extra motivation; I need something to calm me down."

SEE WORDS ON PAGE 31



AP

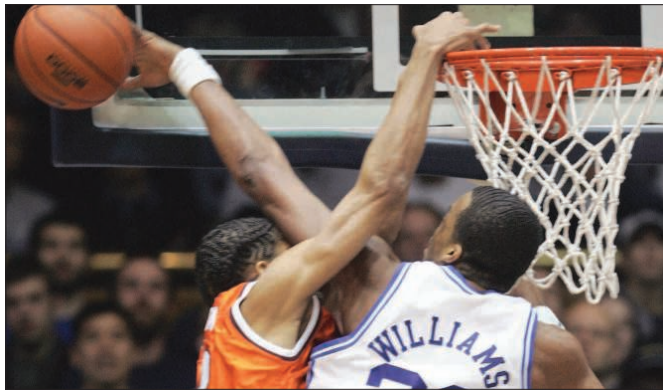
Patriots safety Rodney Harrison said Freddie Mitchell's comments "were clearly a mistake. No one in this league would attack somebody a week before the Super Bowl."



AP

Eagles receiver Freddie Mitchell will get a lot more attention from the Patriots after "disrespecting our whole defense," according to linebacker Willie McGinest.

Thou shalt not dunk on Duke



AP

Duke's Sheldon Williams rejects Virginia Tech's Deron Washington during the Blue Devils' 100-65 win. Top 25 coverage, Page 28.



Owens back at practice
with Eagles

Page 31



Irwin takes Turtle Bay
for record fifth straight

Page 29

Kildow bruises back during training run crash Page 30



6 54260 00101 9